

Poet Lore

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THE POET LORE PRIZE COMPETITION

IT has been a pleasant task to read the poems—two hundred or more—that have been sent in in competition for the POET LORE prize. No one can doubt upon reading these poems that the American people have an irresistible tendency for dropping into poetry, and much of it shows real promise. The general criticism to be made is that, on the whole, our younger poets lack originality of theme and evenness in workmanship. Many a poem will have a line or a stanza showing so true a touch of inspiration as to make one long that the whole poem were upon a similar plane.

The truth is that poetry needs to be taken with far more seriousness than it usually is. If one has a gift for verse, he cannot depend solely upon impulse and the inspiration of the moment to carry him through. He must add to this tireless study, to the end that he may enlarge the furnishings of his mind and improve his technique. There must be the material to build with and the art of putting the material together; then when the moment of inspiration comes there will come with it the power of sustaining it. The creative moment in art is like the match which lights the lamp but there must be oil to burn and a wick to give form to the flame. Otherwise the creative moment ends in a mere ephemeral splutter, which gives some bright sparks, it is true, but nothing that lasts.

In awarding the prize the editors have looked both for substance and workmanship and not having found any one poem combining these elements to a supreme degree, they decided to divide the prize between the poem entitled 'The Merman and the Seraph,' and the ode entitled 'The Prayer of the Poet.' To the first the prize is given for the best technique combined with poetic imagination and to the second the prize is given for largeness of thought and forcefulness in expression. To others they give honor-

able mention for the attainment of lesser degrees of excellence in these particulars, — namely, to the poems entitled ‘The Litanies of Love,’ ‘The All Embracing,’ ‘Heloise to Abelard: a Sonnet Sequence,’ ‘The Masters,’ ‘The Flutes of Spring.’

It is a disappointment that more of the poems do not show some distinctive note pointing to a national development in poetry in sympathy with the highest modern ideals. Are our poets never to be more than imitators of past standards? One looks in vain for the signs of a strong new personality, such as we have had the promise of in Emerson and Whitman. The treatment of this or that American theme with more or less historical or local color is not necessarily to be national. Rather the poet must himself or herself combine and fuse in his or her personality all the large and upward-looking forces of that modern civilization for which America ought to stand. Thus shall one feel that the poet has his hand upon the wheel of great tendencies and is himself one of the steersmen toward those ‘amplitudes’ which as Whitman prophesies shall be all the nation’s ‘own.’

At present we are undergoing a melting-down process — hard to stand up against. All nations flow toward our shore. All knowledge is ours, all ideals are being experimented with and tested, and in the living out of the first of our national principles, liberty, we have not yet discovered which of many social ideals are those to be found wanting. We are in a state of transition and indecision not conducive to the development of strong, controlling personalities. Yet when the right time comes, out of this seething chaotic mass of opinion will come the future leaders of humanity and among them the poets must hold a conspicuous place. Not that these coming poets are to be didactic, but they must be sure of love and honor and all nobility in their own hearts and give voice through the symbols of their art to a greater civilization than the world has known before.

Regarding the ode ‘The Prayer of the Poet,’ we should explain with reference to the rules governing the competition that we considered the claim of this poem without including the epilogue, which overstepped the limit of length. The poem is complete without it. We follow the author’s preference, however, in adding it for publication in the present issue of POET LORE.

In writing these few words of criticism, encouragement and earnest hope for increasing seriousness and aspiration on the part of our younger poets we are still in ignorance of the names of the authors whose poems we have selected and whom we congratulate for the promise shown in their work.—*The Editors.*

. The authors of these poems are
William Benjamin Smith, author of *The Merman and the Seraph* (submitted under the title of "Love ? or Love ?")
Curtis Hidden Page, author of *The Prayer of the Poet* (submitted under the title of "A Poet's Prayer"), and *The Litanies of Love*.
Ingram Crockett, author of *The All Embracing*.
Marion C. Stanley, author of *Heloise to Abelard*.
Clinton Scollard, author of *The Masters*.
Ethel B. Howard, author of *The Flutes of Spring*.

THE PRAYER OF THE POET

BY CURTIS HIDDEN PAGE

I

OH, could I speak!
When I have won some hard rock-guarded peak
Of life and vision, then in ringing song
To speak new thought out strong —

In rock-hewn words to tell
With roughly rhythmic spell
The grandeur and the mystery of things,
The passion and the agony of life,
The glory of our conquerings —
The glory even of unconquering strife;

The wonder of the universe,
From every meanest blade that cuts the sod
To the great star-domed temple of our God,
Pulsing with restless, unknown force —

But most, of man's strong life, that would be all
And grasp the universe; that climbs to fall
And falls to rise and climb and fall again;

And of man's heart, that bears the biting pain
Of love imperfect, and forever strives
Toward perfect love, and by that striving lives;

Oh, could I catch this true world-rhythm, and sing
God grant it!—His sweet music at the heart of everything!

III

Then should I be the poet — God's true seer,
His prophet, telling of Himself to men!
A Milton, or a Goethe, sent again
To speak His truth out, rhythmical and clear;
To make our knowledge wisdom, and our verse
Music, the essence of the universe.

Then, then once more should be expressed in full
What now we only feel —
Surpassing beauty, truth made beautiful . . .
O God, I humbly kneel . . .

Epilogue

Yet, if this highest part be not for me,
Oh, let the poet come, and let me be
His John the Baptist, to prepare his way . . .
Or if he may not come in this our day,
Too hard and faithless, only let me be
His Simeon, and prolong life's niggard lease
To see his face, and know that it is he,
To touch his forehead, and depart in peace.

THE MERMAN AND THE SERAPH

BY WILLIAM BENJAMIN SMITH

I

DEEP the sunless seas amid,
Far from Man, from Angel hid,
Where the soundless tides are rolled
Over Ocean's treasure-hold,
With dragon eye and heart of stone,
The ancient Merman mused alone.

THE MERMAN AND THE SERAPH

II

And aye his arrowed Thoughts he wings
 Straight at the inmost core of things —
 As mirrored in his Magic glass
 The lightning-footed Ages pass,—
 And knows nor joy nor Earth's distress,
 But broods on Everlastingness.
*"Thoughts that love not, thoughts that hate not,
 Thoughts that Age and Change await not,
 All unfeeling,
 All revealing,
 Scorning height's and depth's concealing,
 These be mine — and these alone!" —*
 Saith the Merman's heart of stone.

III

Flashed a radiance far and nigh
 As from the vertex of the sky,—
 Lo! a Maiden beauty-bright
 And mantled with mysterious might
 Of every power, below, above,
 That weaves resistless spell of Love.

IV

Through the weltering waters cold
 Shot the sheen of silken gold;
 Quick the frozen Heart below
 Kindled in the amber glow;
 Trembling Heavenward Nekkan yearned,
 Rose to where the Glory burned.

*"Deeper, bluer than the skies are,
 Dreaming meres of morn thine eyes are;
 All that brightens
 Smile or heightens
 Charm is thine, all life enlightens,
 Thou art all the soul's desire"—*
 Sang the Merman's Heart of fire.

*"Woe thee, Nekkan! Ne'er was given
Thee to walk the ways of Heaven;
Vain the vision,
Fate's derision,
Thee that raps to realms elysian,
Fathomless profounds are thine"—
Quired the answering voice divine.*

V

Came an echo from the West,
Pierced the deep celestial breast;
Summoned, far the Seraph fled,
Trailing splendour overhead;
Broad beneath her flying feet,
Laughed the silvered ocean-street.

VI

On the Merman's mortal sight
Instant fell the pall of Night;
Sunk to the sea's profoundest floor
He dreams the vanished Vision o'er,
Hears anew the starry chime,
Ponders aye Eternal Time.
*"Thoughts that hope not, thoughts that fear not,
Thoughts that Man and Demon veer not,
Times unending
Comprehending,
Space and worlds of worlds transcending,
These are mine — but these alone!"—
Sighs the Merman's heart of stone.*

THREE ONE-ACT PLAYS

BY AUGUST STRINDBERG

Translated from the German of Emil Schering by Mary Harned

THE OUTCAST

Freely adapted by Strindberg from a novel of Ola Hansson's

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ:

MR. X., archæologist }
MR. Y., from America } men of middle age.

SCENE

SIMPLY furnished room in the country; door and window at back, looking out over the landscape. In the center of the room, a large dining table with books, writing materials and antiquities, on one side; a microscope, insect cases and collecting jars, on the other. To the left, a book-stand. Otherwise the furnishing is that of a well-to-do peasant's room.

(MR. Y. comes in, in his shirt-sleeves, with an insect net and a botanizing box; he goes directly to the book-stand, takes out a book, and settles down to read it.)

(The bell in the country church rings for service. The landscape and the cottage are bathed in sunlight. Now and then the clucking of the hens is heard outside.)

(MR. X. comes in, in his shirt-sleeves.)

(MR. Y. starts violently, puts the book back, upside-down, and pretends that he is looking for another book on the stand.)

MR. X. What oppressive heat! I think we shall surely have a thunder-storm.

MR. Y. Indeed! Why do you think so?

MR. X. The bells jingle so dryly, the flies stick and the hens cluck. I wanted to go out fishing, but couldn't find a single worm. Don't you feel nervous?

MR. Y. (abstractedly). I? — Oh, yes!

MR. X. You look as if you were expecting a thunder-storm, most of the time.

Mr. Y. (*shudders*). Do I?

Mr. X. Well, since you are going away to-morrow, it isn't strange if you have traveller's fever.

What news is there? — Here's the mail. (*Takes letters from the table.*) Oh! I have palpitation of the heart every time I open a letter — just debts, debts! Have you ever had debts?

Mr. Y. (*pondering*). N-o!

Mr. X. Well, then you don't understand how it feels to have unpaid bills come in. (*Reads a letter.*) The rent unpaid — the landlord presses — my wife, in despair! And here I sit, up to my elbows in gold! (*Opens an iron-bound casket which stands on the table, they sit down by it, one on each side.*) Look at this, here I have six thousand kronen worth of gold things which I have dug up in the last fortnight! This armlet, alone, would bring me the three hundred and fifty kronen I need. And with all these things together I could get on in the world brilliantly. I would, of course, have the illustrations drawn and engraved at once, for my thesis, and then I would print — and travel. Why don't I do it, do you think?

Mr. Y. You are probably afraid of being discovered.

Mr. X. It may be that. But don't you think an intelligent man like myself could arrange things so that he would not be discovered? I go out there alone — without any witnesses — and root around in the hills. What would there be remarkable in my putting a few things in my pocket?

Mr. Y. But disposing of them would be the dangerous part.

Mr. X. Oh pshaw! I would melt them all together of course, and then I would cast them into ducats — of full weight, of course . . .

Mr. Y. Of course!

Mr. X. You can readily understand that. If I wanted to make counterfeit coins, why — I shouldn't need to dig for gold first. (*Pause.*) It is, at all events, remarkable, that if some one else should do the thing that I cannot decide upon doing, myself, I would exonerate him, while I could not exonerate myself. I could make a brilliant defense for the thief, prove that this gold was *res nullius*, i. e., belonged to no one, since it belonged to an age when there were no property rights; that, too, it belonged, now, to no other than the first comer, since the landowner had not reckoned it in, in the valuation of his property — and so on.

Mr. Y. And it would probably be that much easier to make your defense if, hm, the thief had not stolen from necessity, but, for example, from a mania for collecting, scientific interest, ambition, to make a discovery. Wouldn't it?

Mr. X. You mean, I would not be able to exonerate him if he had stolen from necessity? No, for in that case alone, the law never excuses. That is simple stealing.

Mr. Y. And you wouldn't excuse that?

Mr. X. Hm! Excuse. I certainly could not, where the law did not. And I must confess I would hardly accuse a collector of theft, if he took antiquities, found on foreign soil, if he didn't have them in his own collection.

Mr. Y. So vanity, ambition, would excuse what necessity would not?

Mr. X. And still, necessity would be the stronger, the only real excuse. Yes, it's true! And I can change it just as little as I can change my wish not to steal, whatever the case may be.

Mr. Y. And you count it as a great virtue in yourself that you can not, hm, steal.

Mr. X. The wish not to steal is just as irresistible in me, as the desire to steal is irresistible in some other man, and it is no virtue. I can not do it and he cannot help doing it. — You understand that the longing to possess this gold is not wanting in me. Why don't I take it, then? I cannot! That is a weakness, and a deficiency is never a virtue. So! (*He slams the casket shut.*)

(*Clouds have gathered over the landscape and it has grown darker in the cottage. Now it grows very dark, as if a storm were approaching.*)

Mr. X. How sultry it is! I think we are going to have a thunder-storm.

(*Mr. Y. rises and closes the doors and windows.*)

Mr. X. Are you afraid of a thunder-storm?

Mr. Y. It is best to be cautious.

(*They sit down again at the table.*)

Mr. X. You are a curious fellow. You strike this place like a bomb, a fortnight ago, introduce yourself as a Swedish American, who is collecting flies for a small museum . . .

Mr. Y. Don't bother yourself about me.

Mr. X. That's what you always say when I grow tired of talking of myself and want to devote a little attention to you. Perhaps that is the reason why I have found you so congenial, you let me talk so much about myself. We were old acquaintances at once. You had no corners for me to hit against, no thorns to prick myself on. There was something so mild and gentle about your whole person, you were so full of that consideration which is manifested only by the most cultured; you never made a noise

when you came in late, made no commotion when you rose in the morning, ignored trifles, withdrew when there was any trouble brewing — in a word, you were the perfect everyday friend. Yet you were entirely too compliant, too negative, too quiet for me to be with you long without beginning to wonder — and you are so full of fear and dread — it looks as if you were two men. Do you know, when I sit here in front of the mirror, and look at your back — it seems as if I saw another man.

(*Mr. Y. turns and looks in the mirror.*)

Mr. X. Oh, you can't see your own back! From the front you look like a frank, candid man, who goes to meet his fate with bared breast, but in the back — I don't wish to be discourteous — but you look as if you carried a burden, as if you were ducking from a cudgeling, and when I see your red suspenders crossed over your white shirt — they look to me like a big stamp, a merchandise stamp on a packing-box . . .

Mr. Y. (rises). I believe I shall suffocate — if that storm doesn't come soon.

Mr. X. It's coming in a minute, don't be so uneasy. — And then the back of your neck! It looks as if there had been a second face there, but a face of an entirely different type from yours. You are so frightfully narrow between the ears, that I sometimes ask myself what sort of stock you come from. (*It lightens.*) That looked as if it struck over at the sheriff's.

Mr. Y. (uneasily). At the s-sheriff's?

Mr. X. Yes, it just looked so. But we won't get any of this storm. Sit down and let's chat awhile, since you're going tomorrow.

It's remarkable, that you, with whom I became intimate at once, are one of those people whose faces I cannot recall when they are absent. When you are out in the fields and I am reminded of you I always see another acquaintance, who is not really like you, but with whom you possess certain characteristics in common.

Mr. Y. Who is he?

Mr. X. I don't wish to mention his name. But I will tell you that I took my luncheon for several years at the same restaurant, and met there, at the lunch table, a little, blond man with light, prominent eyes. He had the incredible ability of walking about in the worst crowds, without knocking into people or being knocked into. Standing in the doorway, he could get a slice of bread three yards away. He always looked happy at being with people, and when he saw an acquaintance he was so enchanted he laughed aloud, embraced and stroked him as if he had not met a human being in

years. If any one trod on his foot, he laughed, as if he would beg his pardon for coming in his way.

For two years I saw him and amused myself guessing his calling and character, but I never asked who he was: I did not wish to know, for at that moment my pleasure would cease.

This man had the same peculiarity that you have — that of being undefinable. Sometimes I imagined him a teacher who had not been promoted, a non-commissioned officer, an apothecary, a chancery clerk, a detective; like you he seemed to be compounded of two different pieces, for his front and back didn't go together. One day I chanced to read in the newspaper of a big forgery by a well-known civil official. — I found out then that my undefinable friend had been the partner of the forger's brother and that his name was Strohmenn. Then I learned that the before-mentioned Strohmenn had had a circulating library; but that now he was criminal reporter on a big newspaper. How was I to find any connection between forgery, police news and the unusual bearing of my undefinable friend? I do not know, but I asked a friend whether Strohmenn had ever been punished. He answered neither yes nor no — he did not know!

(Pause.)

Mr. Y. Well? Had he been — punished?

Mr. X. No. He had not been punished.

(Pause.)

Mr. Y. You think that was the reason he was drawn to the neighborhood of the police, and was so afraid of quarreling with any one?

Mr. X. Yes.

Mr. Y. Did you become acquainted with him then?

Mr. X. No, I didn't wish to.

(Pause.)

Mr. Y. Would you have made his acquaintance if he — had been punished?

Mr. X. Yes, gladly!

(Mr. Y. rises and walks up and down the room several times.)

Mr. X. Do sit still! — Why can't you sit still?

Mr. Y. Where did you gain this open gaze over human relations? Are you Christ?

Mr. X. No, you can certainly hear that in what I say.

(Mr. Y. play of expression.)

Mr. X. Christ demands forgiveness, but I demand punishment, to bring about the restoration of the equilibrium, or whatever you choose to

call it. And you who have been in jail must recognize that.

Mr. Y. (*stands motionless, looks at MR. X. at first with wild eyes filled with hatred, then with consternation and admiration*). How — can — you — know — that?

Mr. X. I can see it.

Mr. Y. How? How can you see it?

Mr. X. I have learned it. It is an art like many others. But now we will talk no more about the matter. (*Looks at his watch, lays down a paper to be signed, dips a pen into the ink and hands it to MR. Y.*) I must think of my tangled affairs. Be so good as to witness my signature on this note which I will present at the bank at Malmo tomorrow, when I go there with you.

Mr. Y. I do not intend to go by way of Malmo.

Mr. X. You do not?

Mr. Y. No.

Mr. X. But you can witness the signature in any case.

Mr. Y. N — no. — I never write my name on any papers . . .

Mr. X. — any more. That's the fifth time you have refused to write your name. The first time it was a postal receipt — then I commenced to watch you, and now I notice that you shudder at the idea of taking up a pen with ink. You have sent no letters since you came here; only a card and that you wrote with a pencil. Do you see now how I worked out your false step? — Further! It is the seventh time you have refused to go with me to Malmo, where you have not been during these two weeks. And yet you came here from America to see Malmo. And you walk half a mile to the south of here every morning, to Mill Hill, to look at the roofs of Malmo. And when you stand at the right-hand window and look through the third pane on the left, counted from the bottom up, you see the turrets of the castle and the chimneys of the county prison. Do you see now that it is not that I am so clever, but that you are so stupid?

Mr. Y. Now, you despise me!

Mr. X. No.

Mr. Y. But you do, you must despise me.

Mr. X. No! — See, here you have my hand on it!

(MR. Y. *kisses the outstretched hand.*)

Mr. X. (*pulls back his hand*). What dog's manners are these?

Mr. Y. Pardon me; but you were the first man to reach out his hand to me, after he had found out . . .


Mr. X. And now you will no longer say thou to me. — It frightens

me, that after having been punished you do not feel yourself raised up onto the level again, washed clean, just as good as any one. Would you be willing to tell me how it happened? Would you?

Mr. Y. (forcing himself to answer). Yes, but you won't believe what I say; I will tell you about it, however, and you will see that I am no common criminal, you will be convinced that there are false steps which are, so to speak, involuntary — (*forcing the words*), which take themselves, as it were — are spontaneous — done without the consent of the will, which we cannot help. — May I open the door a little? I believe the storm is over.

Mr. X. Be so kind.

Mr. Y. (opens the door; then he sits down at the table and relates the following with dry enthusiasm, theatrical gestures and false accents). Well! It happened this way! I was a student at Lund and wanted a loan from the bank. I had no serious debts and my father had some money — though not much. I had sent my note to the second man for his signature as my security, and, contrary to my expectations, it was returned with a refusal. — I sat there for a moment, benumbed by the blow, for it was a disagreeable surprise, very disagreeable! — The paper lay before me on the table and the letter lay near it. At first my eyes wandered disconsolately over the fatal lines, that held my sentence — it was by no means my death sentence, for I could very easily get other security, as much as I wanted for that matter — but, as I said, this was very unpleasant, anyhow; and as I sit there, perfectly innocent, gradually my looks fasten on the signature to the letter, which in the right place might, perhaps, have been the making of my future. The signature was an unusual piece of caligraphy — you know that you can sit thinking and at the same time completely cover a piece of blotting paper with the most insignificant words. I had a pen in my hand — (*takes up a pen*) so, and as it happened, it began to write — I do not affirm that there was anything mystical — spiritual behind this — for I do not believe in such things. — It was a purely thoughtless, mechanical process — I sat there and time after time, copied that beautiful autograph — of course without the least intention of profiting in any way by so doing. By the time the letter was scrawled all over, I had gained perfect skill in drawing the name — (*throws the pen away violently*) and then I forgot everything. I slept soundly and heavily all night and when I wakened it seemed to me that I had dreamed, but I could not remember what the dream was; only it seemed as if a door were opened a little and as if I could see the writing-table and the note like a memory — when I rose I felt myself driven toward the table, just as if, after mature consideration, I had made an irrevocable

decision to sign that name to that most fateful paper. All thoughts as to the consequences of this risk had disappeared — there was no doubt — it was almost as if I had some cherished duty to perform — and I wrote. (*Springs up.*) What can it have been? Was it hypnotism, suggestion as it is called? If so, by whom? I slept alone in my room. Could it have been my uncivilized I, the savage who recognizes no contracts, who, while my consciousness slept, came to the front with his criminal desires and his incapability of reckoning the consequences of an action? Tell me, what do you think of the matter? 

Mr. X. (forces out the following). To tell you the truth, your story does not quite satisfy me — there were gaps, but that may be because you no longer remember all the details — I have read a number of tales of criminal hypnotism — I wish I could recall — hm! — But it is of no consequence — you have had your punishment — and you have had the courage to acknowledge your blunder. Let us talk no more about it.

Mr. Y. Yes, yes, yes we will talk more about it; we will talk until I feel perfectly conscious of my innocence.

Mr. X. Don't you feel so now?

Mr. Y. No, I do not.

Mr. X. Well, there you are! It's just that, that unsettles me. It's just that, that unsettles me. — Don't you believe that every man has a corpse on board? Haven't we all stolen and lied as children? Certainly, we have. Well, there are men who remain children all their lives, who cannot control their unlawful desires. If the opportunity but come, the criminal is there. — But I cannot understand your not feeling yourself innocent. If we regard the child as irresponsible we ought to regard the criminal so, too.

It is remarkable — well, it doesn't matter if I do regret it later, perhaps, . . . (*Pause.*) I killed a man once, I did, and I have never had a single scruple.

Mr. Y. (extremely interested). You — did?

Mr. X. Yes, even I! — Perhaps you won't give your hand to a murderer?

Mr. Y. (gratified). Oh, what nonsense!

Mr. X. Yes, but I have not been punished.

Mr. Y. (intimately, thoughtfully). So much the better for you! — How did you manage to escape it?

Mr. X. There was no one to inform against me, no suspicion, no witnesses. The thing happened in this way: — A comrade had invited me

at Christmas time to hunt up beyond Upsala. He sent to meet me an old drunken Instmann who went to sleep on the box, stuck fast in a rut in the road, and overturned the carriage into a ditch. I won't push the blame onto his endangering my life, simply, in an attack of impatience, I gave him a blow on the back of the neck, to waken him, and the result was he never did waken, but remained on the spot, dead.

Mr. Y (cunningly). And you never gave yourself up?

Mr. X. No, for the following reasons: the man had no relatives nor any one to whom his life was necessary; he had lived out his period of existence; his place could be immediately taken by some one who would make better use of it than he; while I, on the other hand, was absolutely necessary to the well-being of my parents, of myself and perhaps of science. By the outcome of the matter, I was cured of the desire to deal blows on the back of the neck, and in order to satisfy an abstract justice, I had no mind to ruin my own and my parents' lives.

Mr. Y. Ah, so you are a judge of human worth?

Mr. X. In the case in question, yes!

Mr. Y. But the consciousness of guilt, the equilibrium?

Mr. X. I had no consciousness of guilt, for I had committed no crime. As a boy I had received and given blows on the back of the neck, and it was only my ignorance of their effect on older people that brought about the fatal result.

Mr. Y. True, but there is a penalty of two years' imprisonment at hard labor for homicide by negligence, — as well as for — forgery.

Mr. X. That I have thought of that, you can well believe. And many a night I have dreamed that I was in prison. Since you know, is it as hard as they say, to be behind bolts and bars?

Mr. Y. Yes, sir, it's hard! — First of all they disfigure your outer man by cutting off your hair, so that if you didn't look like a criminal beforehand, you do afterward, and when you look in the mirror you are convinced that you are a bandit.

Mr. X. That is tearing off the mask, perhaps. That's not badly planned.

Mr. Y. You can afford to jest about it. — And then they reduce your food, so that every day and hour you feel a decided difference between life and death. All the functions of life are depressed, you feel all shrunken together, and your soul, which should be helped and healed, is put on the hunger cure, is pushed back into the past, a thousand years; you can only read books written for the savages of migratory ages, you can hear only of

things that never could happen under heaven, but what does happen on earth remains a secret; you are torn away from your environment, pulled down out of your class, are put under men who are beneath you, have visions as if you lived in the bronze age, feel as if you walked about in the skins of animals, dwelt in a cave and ate out of a trough. Ugh!

Mr. X. Yes, and yet there is reason in it all; the man who acts as if he belonged to the bronze age ought to live in his historic costume.

Mr. Y. (furious). You sneer, you who have wrought havoc like a man from the stone age. And yet you dare to live in the golden age.

Mr. X. (searchingly, sharply). What do you mean by those last words — golden age?

Mr. Y. (maliciously). Nothing.

Mr. X. You lie, you are too cowardly to say what you mean.

Mr. Y. I am cowardly? Do you think so? I was not cowardly, when I dared to come into this region where I have suffered as I did. — But do you know the thing that torments a man most when he is in prison? — It is, you sir, that the others are not in prison too.

Mr. X. What others?

Mr. Y. Those who have not been punished.

Mr. X. Do you allude to me?

Mr. Y. Yes.

Mr. X. I have committed no crime.

Mr. Y. Indeed? You haven't?

Mr. X. No, a mischance is not a crime.

Mr. Y. Oh, so it is a mischance when a man commits murder?

Mr. X. I did not commit murder.

Mr. Y. Indeed, so it is not murder to strike a man dead?

Mr. X. No, not always! There is manslaughter, manslaughter by negligence, assault with fatal outcome, with the subdivision, with intent to kill and without intent to kill. Meanwhile — I am now really afraid of you — for you belong to the most dangerous category of my fellow beings — the stupid.

Mr. Y. Oh indeed! So you imagine that I am stupid. Listen to me. Do you want a proof that I am very sly?

Mr. X. Let's hear it.

Mr. Y. Will you acknowledge that I argue wisely and logically if I do? You have had the misfortune to do what might have brought on you two years of imprisonment at hard labor. You have entirely and wholly escaped this degrading punishment. Now here is another man — who

has been sacrificed to a misfortune — to an unconscious hypnotism — and who has had to endure the two years of imprisonment at hard labor. This man can by a great scientific service wash away the spot, which he has involuntarily gotten on himself; — but, for the accomplishment of this service, he must have money — a great deal of money — and have the money now, at once!

Don't you think that the other — the one who is unpunished — would restore the equilibrium in human relations if he were sentenced to a corresponding fine? Don't you think so?

Mr. X. (quietly). Yes.

Mr. Y. Well, then we understand each other, — Hm! (*Pause*). How much do you consider reasonable?

Mr. X. Reasonable! The law places the minimum fine at fifty kronen. But as the departed had no relatives, all talk about the matter is senseless.

Mr. Y. So you don't wish to understand! Then I shall speak more plainly: you shall pay the fine to me.

Mr. X. I have never before heard that homicides should pay their fines to forgers. — And besides, there is no accuser here.

Mr. Y. Isn't there? — But there is — I am here!

Mr. X. Now things are beginning to straighten out. — How much do you demand to become accessory to manslaughter?

Mr. Y. Six thousand kronen.

Mr. X. That's too much! — Where should I procure that much?

(*Mr. Y. points to the casket.*)

Mr. X. I won't do that! I won't be a thief!

Mr. Y. Don't act like that. Do you want to make me believe that you haven't yet taken anything from the casket?

Mr. X. (as if to himself). How could I have erred so grossly? But that's the way with gentle people! We love gentle natures and believe so easily that we are loved, and for that very reason I have been on my guard against those whom I loved. — So, so, it is your firm conviction that I have already taken things from the casket?

Mr. Y. Yes, I am sure of it.

Mr. X. And now you intend to denounce me, if you do not receive six thousand kronen?

Mr. Y. Most certainly! You can't get away from it, so there's no use trying to.

Mr. X. You think I will give my father a thief for a son; my wife a

thief for a husband; my children a thief for a father; my comrades a thief for a colleague! That shall never be! — I shall go at once to the sheriff and give myself up.

Mr. Y. (jumps up and collects his things). Wait a minute.

Mr. X. What for?

Mr. Y. (stammering). I only thought — if I am no longer needed here — I do not need to be present — and can go.

Mr. X. You can not. — Sit down on your chair at the table, where you have been sitting, we will first talk a little.

Mr. Y. (sits down having first put on a dark coat). What is it now?

Mr. X. (looks in the mirror behind MR. Y.). Now it's all clear to me. Oh! —

Mr. Y. (uneasily). What do you see remarkable now?

Mr. X. I see in the mirror that you are a thief — a simple, ordinary thief. — Just now, when you were sitting there in your white shirt, I noticed only that something was wrong on my book-shelves, but I couldn't tell just what, for I had to listen to you and watch you. Now that I have begun to dislike you, my eyes have grown sharper, and when you put on your black coat, the red backs of the books, which didn't show before against your red suspenders, show clearly against the contrasting color and I see that you have been at my book-shelves, have read your forgery story in Bernheim's 'Treatise on Hypnotism' and have put back the book, upside-down. So you stole your story, too!

In consequence of this, I consider I am justified in concluding that you committed your crime from necessity or from love of pleasure.

Mr. Y. From necessity. If you knew . . .

Mr. X. If you knew in what need I have lived — and still live! But we are not discussing that now. — Further. You have been in prison — that is almost certain; but it was in America, for it was American prison life that you described; a second thing is almost as certain: you have not done your time here.

Mr. Y. How can you say that?

Mr. X. Wait till the sheriff comes and you will learn.

(MR. Y. gets up.)

Mr. X. There, you see! The first time that I mentioned the sheriff, in connection with that stroke of lightning, you wanted to jump up. And when a man has been in prison, he doesn't go onto a hill where there are windmills and look out from there, nor get behind a window-pane. — In short, you both have and have not been punished. And that is the reason it has been so uncommonly hard to get at you.

(Pause).

Mr. Y. (*completely discomfited*). May I go now?

Mr. X. Yes, now, you may go.

Mr. Y. (*gathers his things together*). Are you angry at me?

Mr. X. Yes. — Would you rather that I should commiserate you?

Mr. Y. (*obstinately*). Commiserate? Do you consider yourself better than I?

Mr. X. Certainly I do, since I am better than you. I have greater wisdom than you and am of more value in the community.

Mr. Y. You are very crafty, but not so crafty as I. I am checked now, but with the next move, you may be check-mated — after all.

Mr. X. (*fixes Y. with his eyes*). Shall we need to make another move? — What wrong do you think to do now?

Mr. Y. That is my secret.

Mr. X. May I look at you? — You think of writing an anonymous letter to my wife and telling her my secret.

Mr. Y. Yes, and you can not prevent me. You can not imprison me, so you must let me go, and when I am gone, I can do what I will.

Mr. X. Oh, you devil! You have hit my Achilles heel. — Do you want to force me to become a murderer?

Mr. Y. You can not — you poor fellow!

Mr. X. You see that is just the difference between people. You, yourself, feel that I can not commit such deeds as you can, therefore you have the upper hand. But suppose you force me to do to you as I did to the coachman. (*Raises his hand as if to strike him in the back of the neck.*)

Mr. Y. (*looks X. fixedly in the face*). You can not. The man who could not take his salvation out of the casket, can not do that.

Mr. X. So you do not believe that I have taken anything out of the casket?

Mr. Y. You were too cowardly. As you were too cowardly to tell your wife that she had married a murderer.

Mr. X. You are another kind of man than I — whether stronger or weaker — I know not — more criminal or not — does not concern me. But that you are stupider, that is certain, for you were stupid when you wrote the name of another instead of begging — as I have had to do; you were stupid, when you went over there and stole out of my book — didn't it occur to you that I might have read my books? — You were stupid, when you thought you were cleverer than I and could entice me to become a thief; you were stupid, when you thought that it would bring about an equilibrium

if the world should have two thieves instead of one; and you were stupidest of all, when you imagined I had built up my life's happiness without having laid the corner-stone securely. Go off and write anonymous letters to my wife, telling her that her husband is a homicide — she knew that before she was married!

Are you ready to be off, now?

Mr. Y. May I go?

Mr. X. You must go now! Immediately! — Your things will follow. Out with you!

SIMOOM

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

BISKRA, *Arabian maiden.*

YOUSSEF, *her lover.*

GUIMARD, *lieutenant of Zouaves.*

In Algiers, in our day.

SCENE

An Arabian marabout's burial chamber with a sarcophagus in the center on the ground. Here and there, prayer rugs; in the right corner, a charnel house. Door in the background with curtains; window-openings in the back wall. Little heaps of sand here and there on the ground; an aloe that has been torn up, palm leaves and alfa-grass in a heap.

(BISKRA enters, the hood of her burnoose drawn over her face, and a guitar on her back; throws herself down on a rug and says a prayer, her arms crossed over her breast.)

(*Outside, the wind blows.*)

Biskra. La ilaha illallah!

Youssef (*enters hurriedly*). The simoom is coming. Where is the Frenchman?

Biskra. He will be here in a minute.

Youssef. Why did you not strike him down at once?

Biskra. I did not, because, he must do it himself. If I had done it, the white men would kill our whole race, for they know that I was the guide, Ali, although they do not know that I am the maiden, Biskra.

Youssef. He must do it himself? How shall that come to pass?

Biskra. You do not know that the simoom parches the brains of the white men like dates, and that they see terrible things, which makes life so hateful to them that they rush out into the great unknown.

Youssef. I have heard something of this kind, and at the time of the last engagement, six Frenchmen laid violent hands on themselves before they reached their destination. But do not rely on the simoom today, for snow has fallen on the mountains, and in half an hour all may be over. — Biskra! Can you still hate?

Biskra. Can I hate? — My hatred is boundless as the desert, burning as the sun and stronger than my love. Every moment of enjoyment which they stole from me when they killed Ali, has gathered like the poison under the tooth of the viper, and what the simoom can not do, I can do.

Youssef. Well said, Biskra, and you will accomplish it. My hatred has withered like the alfa-grass in autumn, since my eyes have seen you. Take of my strength, and be the arrow to my bow.

Biskra. Embrace me, Youssef! Embrace me!

Youssef. Not here, in the presence of the holy one; not now — later, afterward. When you have earned your reward!

Biskra. Proud sheik, proud man!

Youssef. Yes — the maiden who shall bear my offspring beneath her heart must prove herself worthy of that honor.

Biskra. I — no other — will bear Youssef's offspring. I, Biskra — the despised, the hideous, but the strong.

Youssef. So be it! Now, I go down to sleep beside the spring. — Need I teach you the secret arts, you learned from the great marabout, Sidi-sheik, and have practiced in the markets since you were a child?

Biskra. You do not need to. — I know all the secrets necessary to scare a cowardly Frenchman out of his life; the coward who creeps upon his enemy and sends his lead balls in advance of him. I know everything — even to ventriloquism. And what my arts can not accomplish, the sun will, for the sun is with Youssef and Biskra.

Youssef. The sun is the moslem's friend, but there is no dependence to be placed on him: you may burn yourself, girl. Take a drink of water, for I see that your hands shrivel up and — (*has taken up a rug and now goes down for a bowl of water which he hands to BISKRA.*)

Biskra (*puts the bowl to her lips*) — and my eyes begin to look red — my lungs to grow parched — I hear — I hear — you see, the sand is even now sifting through the roof — and the strings of the guitar sing — the simoom is here! But the Frenchman is not!

Youssef. Come down here, Biskra, and let the Frenchman die by himself.

Biskra. First hell and then death! Did you think I would falter?

(*Pours the water out on a heap of sand.*) I will water the sand, then revenge will grow. And I will dry up my heart. Grow, hate! Burn, sun! Suffocate, wind!

Youssef. Hale to thee, Ibn Youssef's mother, for thou wilt bear Youssef's son, the revenger! Hale!

(*The wind increases; the curtain before the door blows in; the room is illuminated by a red glow which, during the following, changes to yellow.*)

Biskra. The Frenchman is coming, and — the simoom is here! — Go!

Youssef. In half an hour, you will see me again. There is your hour-glass. (*Points to a sand heap.*) The sky measures time even for the hell of the unbelievers.

(*GUIMARD enters, pale, staggering and confused; he speaks in a half whisper.*)

Guimard. The simoom is here! — Where do you think my comrades have gone?

Biskra. I led your comrades westward toward the east.

Guimard. Westward toward — the east. — Let me see. — Yes, that's right, in the east and — westward. — Let me sit down on a chair and give me some water.

Biskra (*leads GUIMARD to a sand heap, makes him lie down on the ground with his head on the sand heap*). Are you comfortably seated?

Guimard (*looks at her*). I am seated a little crooked. Put something under my head.

Biskra (*arranges the sand under his head*). There, now you have a cushion under your head.

Guimard. My head? My feet are certainly there! — Aren't my feet there?

Biskra. Certainly they are.

Guimard. I thought so. — Well, now give me a foot-stool under — my head.

Biskra (*drags up the aloe and puts it under GUIMARD's knees*). There, there's a foot-stool for you.

Guimard. And then, water! — Water!

Biskra (*takes up the empty bowl, fills it with sand and hands it to GUIMARD*). Drink, while it is cold.

Guimard (*sips from the bowl*). It is cold — but it doesn't quench my thirst. — I can not drink — I loathe water — take it away.

Biskra. That is that dog that bit you.

Guimard. What dog? I have never been bitten by a dog.

Biskra. The simoom has made your memory shrivel up, — beware of the delusions of the simoom! Don't you remember the mad greyhound that bit you on the next to the last hunt in Bab-el-Qued?

Guimard. On the hunt in Bab-el-Qued? Yes, that's right! — Was it beaver-colored? —

Biskra. A bitch? Yes! There, you see! And she bit you in the calf of your leg. Don't you feel how the wound stings?

Guimard (*feels for the calf of his leg, sticks himself on the aloe*). Yes, I feel it. — Water! Water!

Biskra (*hands him the bowl of sand*). Drink, drink!

Guimard. No, I can not! Holy Virgin, Mother of God! — I have hydrophobia!

Biskra. Do not be alarmed. I will cure you and drive out the demon by the power of music. Listen!

Guimard (*screams*). Ali! Ali! Not music! I can't bear it! And what sort of use can it be to me?

Biskra. Music tames the malevolent spirit of the snake, do you not believe that it can rule the spirit of a mad dog? Listen! (*Sings to the guitar.*) Biskra-Biskra, Biskra-Biskra, Biskra-Biskra. Simoom! Simoom!

Youssef (*from below*). Simoom! Simoom!

Guimard. What are you singing? Ali!

Biskra. Was I singing? Look at me, I shall put a palm-leaf in my mouth. (*Takes a palm-branch between her teeth. Song from above.*) Biskra-Biskra, Biskra-Biskra, Biskra-Biskra.

Youssef (*from below*). Simoom! Simoom!

Guimard. What hellish delusion is this?

Biskra. Now I shall sing.

Biskra and Youssef (*together*). Biskra-Biskra, Biskra-Biskra, Biskra-Biskra! Simoom!

Guimard (*springs up*). Who are you, you devil, who sing with two voices? Are you a man or a woman? Or both?

Biskra. I am Ali, the guide. You do not recognize me, because your senses are bewildered; but if you wish to escape from your delusions of eye and mind, believe me, believe what I say, and do what I command.

Guimard. You do not need to ask me to believe, for I see that everything is just as you say it is.

Biskra. Now you see, idolater.

Guimard. Idolater?

Biskra. Yes! Take out the idol that you carry on your breast!

(GUIMARD *pulls out a medallion.*)

Biskra. Tread it under foot and call on God, the only true God, the merciful, the compassionate.

Guimard (hesitating). Saint Edward, my patron saint!

Biskra. Can he protect you? Can he?

Guimard. No, he can not! — (*Aroused.*) Yes, he can!

Biskra. We will see. (*Opens the door, the curtain blows and the grass stirs.*)

Guimard (holds his hand over his mouth). Shut the door!

Biskra. Down with your idol!

Guimard. No, I can not.

Biskra. Look, the simoom does not touch a hair of my head, but you, unbeliever, it kills! Down with your idol!

Guimard (throws the medallion on the ground). Water! I am dying!

Biskra. Pray to the only true God, the merciful, the compassionate!

Guimard. How shall I pray?

Biskra. Say the words after me.

Guimard. Speak!

Biskra. God is the only true God, there is no other God but him, the merciful, the compassionate!

Guimard. 'God is the only true God, there is no other God but him, the merciful, the compassionate!'

Biskra. Lie down on the ground.

(GUIMARD *lies down reluctantly.*)

Biskra. What do you hear?

Guimard. I hear a spring gurgling.

Biskra. Now you see! God is the only true God, and there is no other God but him, the merciful, the compassionate! — What do you see?

Guimard. I see a stream gurgling — I hear a lamp shining — in a window with green shutters, — on a white street . . .

Biskra. Who sits at the window?

Guimard. My wife — Elise.

Biskra. Who stands behind the curtain and puts his arm around her neck? —

Guimard. That is my son — George.

Biskra. How old is your son?

Guimard. Four years, on Saint Nicholas day.

Biskra. And he can already stand behind the curtain and put his arm around the neck of another man's wife?

Guimard. He can not — but it is he!

Biskra. Four years old, with a blond moustache!

Guimard. A blond moustache, did you say? — Oh, that is — Julius, my friend.

Biskra. And he stands behind the curtain and puts his arm around your wife's neck!

Guimard. Oh, the devil!

Biskra. Do you see your son?

Guimard. No, I no longer see him.

Biskra (*imitates the ringing of bells on her guitar*). What do you see now?

Guimard. I see the ringing of bells — and I feel the taste of a corpse — it smells in my mouth like rancid butter — ugh! . . .

Biskra. Don't you hear the deacons singing, as they carry the body of a child to the grave?

Guimard. Wait! — I cannot hear it — (*dejectedly*) but if you wish it? — There — now I hear it.

Biskra. Do you see the wreath on the coffin, they are carrying between them?

Guimard. Yes . . .

Biskra. There is a violet ribbon on it — and on the ribbon is printed in silver — “Farewell, my beloved George! — Thy Father.”

Guimard. Yes, there it is! — (*Weeps.*) My George! George! My beloved child! — Elise, my wife, comfort me! — Help me! (*Feels around him.*) Where are you? Elise! Have you left me? Answer! Speak the name of your beloved!

A voice (from the roof). Julius! Julius!

Guimard. Julius. — My name, yes — what is my name? — Charles is my name. — And she calls Julius. — Elise — dear wife — answer me, for your spirit is here, — I feel it — and you solemnly promised me never to love any one else . . .

(*The voice laughs.*)

Guimard. Who laughs?

Biskra. Elise! Your wife!

Guimard. Kill me! — I do not want to live any longer. I loathe life as I do sauerkraut in Saint-Doux — do you know, what Saint-Doux is? Pig's fat. (*Spits.*) I have no spittle — Water! Water! If you don't give it to me, I shall bite you.

(*Full fury of the storm without.*)

Biskra (keeps her mouth closed and coughs). Now, you are dying, Frenchman! Write your last will, while there is yet time. — Where is your note-book?

Guimard (pulls out a note-book and pen). What shall I write?

Biskra. A man thinks of his wife when he is dying — and of his children.

Guimard (writes). 'Elise — I curse you! Simoom — I am dying . . .'

Biskra. Now sign it, or it will be worth nothing.

Guimard. How shall I sign it?

Biskra. Write: 'La ilaha illallah!'

Guimard (writes). It is written. May I die now?

Biskra. Now you may die, a cowardly soldier, who has deserted his comrades. — And you shall have a beautiful funeral, jackals shall sing your body to its grave. (*Beats the attack on the guitar.*) Do you hear the drums calling — to the attack — the unbelievers, who have the simoom and the sun with them, push forward — out of their ambush — (*Strikes her guitar.*) The shots fall along the whole line — the French are not able to load again — the Arabs send scattered shots — the French flee! . . .

Guimard (starts up). The French do not flee!

Biskra (blows the retreat on a flute which she has drawn forth). The French flee when the retreat is blown.

Guimard. They retreat — it is the retreat — and I am here — (*Tears off his epaulettes.*) I am dead. (*Falls to the ground.*)

Biskra. Yes, you are dead. — You do not know it, but you have been dead a long time. — (*Goes to the charnel house, takes out a skull.*)

Guimard. Am I dead? (*Clutches his face.*)

Biskra. A long time! A long time! — See yourself in this mirror. (*Shows him the skull.*)

Guimard. Ah! That is I.

Biskra. Don't you see your prominent cheek-bones — don't you see how the vultures have eaten out your eyes — don't you recognize the hole made when you had that double-tooth drawn on the right side — don't you see the dimple in your chin where your little pointed beard grew that your Elise loved to stroke — don't you see where your ear was, the ear that your George used to kiss in the morning at breakfast — don't you see where the axe was applied to your neck — when the hangman beheaded the deserter! . . .

(*GUIMARD, who has looked and listened with horror, falls down dead.*)

Biskra (who has been on her knees, rises after she has examined his

pulse. Sings). Simoom! Simoom! (Opens the door, the draperies flutter, she holds her hand over her mouth and falls over backward.) Youssef!

(Youssef comes up from below.)

Youssef (examines Guimard, looks for Biskra). Biskra! (Sees Biskra, lifts her up in his arms.) Are you alive?

Biskra. Is the Frenchman dead?

Youssef. If he is not, he soon will be. Simoom! Simoom!

Biskra. Then I live. But give me water.

Youssef (carries her to the steps). Here! — Now, Youssef is thine!

Biskra. And Biskra will be the mother of thy son! Youssef, great Youssef!

Youssef. Strong Biskra! Stronger than the simoom!

DEBIT AND CREDIT

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ:

MR. AXEL, *Doctor and African traveller.*

MR. TURE, *his brother, a gardener.*

Mr. Ture's wife.

MISS CECILIA.

Miss Cecilia's betrothed.

LINDGREN, DOCTOR, *formerly a teacher.*

MISS MARY.

A gentleman of the court.

A waiter.

SCENE

A beautifully furnished room in a hotel. Doors left and right.

(TURE and his wife.)

Ture. Pretty fine room, this! But it's a fine man, too, who lives here.

The wife. Yes, I suppose so! To be sure, I've never seen your brother, but I've heard of him often enough to make up for it.

Ture. Jabber away! My brother, the doctor, has travelled half way through Africa, and it isn't every one who will follow his footsteps, — though he may have drunk such a lot of toddy when he was young . . .

The wife. Your brother, the doctor, indeed! After all he is nothing but an M. A. . . .

Ture. No ma'am, he is Doctor of Philosophy!

The wife. Well, what is that but an M. A.! And my brother at the school at Aby is that too.

Ture. Your brother is a very good man, but he is only a teacher in a public school, and that is not the same thing as a Doctor of Philosophy, and that much I can say without boasting.

The wife. Well, he may be whatever he likes, and be called whatever you like, at all events, he has cost us something.

Ture. Yes, he has cost us something, but he has also given us pleasure.

The wife. Fine pleasure! When we had to leave house and home on his account.

Ture. That's true enough, but we don't know whether his delay in the discharge of the loan, wasn't caused by something he couldn't help. Probably it's not so easy to send money orders out of darkest Africa.

The wife. His having any excuse or not doesn't help matters. Is he going to do anything for us now? It's no more than his duty!

Ture. We shall see! We shall see! — In any case, have you heard that he has gotten four orders?

The wife. Yes, but how does that help us? I believe they'll only make him that much haughtier. No sir, I sha'n't forget so soon, how the sheriff came with those papers — and brought people with him as witnesses — and then — the auction — when all the neighbors came in and fumbled around in our things. Do you know, Ture, what grieved me the most?

Ture. The black . . .

The wife. Yes, my black silk dress that my sister-in-law bought in at fifteen kronen. Fifteen kronen!

Ture. Just wait! Wait! We'll be able to buy a new silk dress . . .

The wife (*weeps*). Yes, but never the same one — the one my sister-in-law bought in.

Ture. Then we can buy another. — Look here, see what a fine hat this is. It must be a gentleman of the court who is in there with Axel.

The wife. What do I care if it is?

Ture. Oh, don't you think it's rather nice, that some one who bears the same name as you and I, is thought so much of that he is visited by friends of the king? I remember that you rejoiced for two weeks when your brother, the teacher, was invited to dine at the bishop's.

The wife. I don't remember it.

Ture. Oh, no, of course not!

The wife. But I remember the fourteenth of March, when, on his

account, we had to leave the farm we had leased, — and we had been married two years and had a child in our arms — oh dear! — And then, the arrival of the steamboat with all its passengers, just as we were moving out, I'll not forget that for all the three-cornered hats in the world. And anyhow, what attention do you think a gentleman of the court will pay to a gardener and his wife, who have been ejected?

Ture. Look at this! What is this? Do you see these orders, his! — Look at this one! (*He takes an order out of the case on the writing-table, lays it in his hand and strokes it gently.*)

The wife. Such trash!

Ture. Don't speak so disrespectfully of orders, we never know where we may be ourselves some day. The gardener at Staringe was made a director and knight today.

The wife. What good does that do us?

Ture. It doesn't do us any good, that's quite true, but this order here (*points to the order*) may be instrumental in some way or other in helping us to a position. — In the meantime, I think this waiting begins to be rather long, so we might as well make ourselves at home here. Come, I will help you take your cloak off. Come!

The wife (after slight resistance). Are you so sure that we shall be welcome? I have a feeling that we won't grow old in this house.

Ture. Oho! And I expect to get a good dinner here, if I know Axel. If he only knew that we are here, he — But, wait a minute! (*He presses a bell on the table; a waiter comes in.*) What will you have? Some bread and butter, perhaps? (*To the waiter.*) Give us some sandwiches and beer. — Wait a minute! A pearl for me — fine brandy! We have to take care of ourselves, you see!

(*Axel and the gentleman of the court enter.*)

Axel (to the gentleman of the court). At five o'clock, then, in frock coat.

The gentleman. And orders.

Axel. Is that necessary?

The gentleman. Absolutely necessary, if you do not wish to be discourteous, and you surely would not be that to any one, since you are a democrat. Farewell, Doctor!

Axel. Farewell!

(*The gentleman bows slightly to TURE and his wife as he passes them; but his greeting is not returned.*)

Axel. Hello! You there, old fellow! It is a long time since we have seen each other! — And this is your wife! Welcome! Welcome!

Ture. Thank you, brother! And welcome yourself after your long journey!

Axel. Yes, it was something of a journey —. You have read all about it in the newspapers, I suppose . . .

Ture. Yes indeed, I have read everything! (*Pause.*) Father sent you his greetings.

Axel. Did he? Is he still angry at me?

Ture. You know the old man and how he is. If you had not been with this expedition, he would have considered it one of the seven wonders of the world. But because you were with it, it is all humbug.

Axel. Then he hasn't changed at all. Because I am his son, nothing that I undertake amounts to anything. At least there is no self-love in that. Well, that's the way with some people! — But what have you been doing with yourself all this time?

Ture. Not much! That old loan . . .

Axel. Yes, that's true! Well, what about it?

Ture. There's this about it, I had to pay it.

Axel. That's really very vexatious. But we'll arrange that matter at the first opportunity.

(*The waiter enters with the things ordered.*)

Axel. What is that?

Ture. Oh, I, I took the liberty of ordering some bread and butter . . .

Axel. That was wise! But we ought to drink a glass of wine with my sister-in-law, since I could not be with you at the wedding.

Ture. No thank you, not for us! Not in the forenoon. Thank you very much!

Axel (*nods to the waiter, he goes out*). I ought really to invite you to dine with me, but I am going out to dine myself. Can you guess where?

Ture. You are not going to the castle, are you?

Axel. Just there. I am to dine with the prince himself.

Ture. God bless us! — What do you say to that, Anna?

(*The wife squirms around uneasily on her chair, and is unable to answer.*)

Axel. The old man will surely become a republican when he hears that his royal majesty is willing to associate with me.

Ture. Listen, Axel. Pardon me, if I mention a subject that is very unpleasant, but of which we must speak.

Axel. I suppose it's that accursed loan?

Ture. Yes, but not only that. To be brief — we have had to have a forced sale on your account, and are hard up.

Axel. So you had a scene, too. But why didn't you renew the loan?

Ture. Oh, that's easy for you to say. Where was I to find any one to go my security when you were away?

Axel. You might have gone to my friends.

Ture. I did go to them. And the result was what it was. Can you help us now?

Axel. How can I help you now? Now, when all my creditors are harassing me? How can I begin to borrow, now, when all my friends are on the point of procuring a position for me? There is no worse recommendation than borrowing. Just wait a little while and matters will arrange themselves.

Ture. Do you think we can wait without being utterly ruined? Right now is the time to begin gardening; the digging and sowing must be done now, if anything is to be gotten out of the earth in good season. Can't you find a position for us?

Axel. Where shall I find the garden?

Ture. At your friends'.

Axel. My friends have no gardens. Don't get in my way when I am trying to save myself. When I am saved, I will save you.

Ture (to his wife). He will not help us, Anna.

Axel. I cannot — not now. Is it reasonable to expect that I, I who am seeking a position for myself, should seek one for some one else too? What will people say to that? There, you see, now we are getting not only him, but his whole family on our shoulders. And then they will let me fall.

Ture (looks at the clock, then at his wife). Well, we must be going.

Axel. Why are you in such a hurry?

Ture. We want to take our child to the doctor.

Axel. Good God, you have a child?

The wife. Yes, we have a child. A sick child, that took sick because we had to move into the kitchen while the auction was being held.

Axel. And this, on my account? I shall go crazy over all this. For my sake! That I might become a celebrated man! What can I do for you? But would I have been any better off, if I had remained at home? Worse, for then I should still be a poor school teacher, who, most certainly, would be of less use to you than I am now. Listen! Go to the doctor and come back again in a little while, and I shall then have thought of something for you.

Ture (to his wife). You see, he is going to help us.

The wife. He must be able to.

Ture. He is able to do what he will!

Axel. But don't depend too much on my help, for then the last state may be worse than the first. — Oh, good God, that you should have a sick child too! And for my sake! —

Ture. Oh, it isn't so bad as it sounds.

The wife. That's the way you talk, you who understand nothing . . .

Ture. Farewell, then, for a little while, Axel.

(*LINDGREN appears in the doorway.*)

The wife. Say, he didn't introduce us to the gentleman from the castle.

Ture. Don't talk nonsense. Why should he?

(*They go out.*)

(*LINDGREN enters. He is rather poorly clad and looks besotted, unshaven and only half awake.*)

(*AXEL starts back at Lindgren's entrance.*)

Lindgren. Don't you recognize me?

Axel. Yes, now I do; but you have changed so.

Lindgren. You think so?

Axel. Yes, I think so, and I am astonished that three years could make so much . . .

Lindgren. Three years may be a long time! — Aren't you going to ask me to sit down?

Axel. Certainly, but I am in somewhat of a hurry.

Lindgren. You were always in a hurry. (*Sits down.*)

(*Pause.*)

Axel. Say something unpleasant.

Lindgren. It's coming! It's coming! (*Wipes his glasses.*)

(*Pause.*)

Axel. How much do you want?

Lindgren. Three hundred and fifty.

Axel. I haven't it and can't get it.

Lindgren. Oh yes, you have! — Pardon me if I take a tear-drop. (*He pours out a glass of brandy.*)

Axel. Will you do me the pleasure of taking a glass of wine instead?

Lindgren. No, why?

Axel. Well, it looks badly for you to take your brandy straight that way.

Lindgren. How elegant you have become!

Axel. It hurts my prestige, my credit.

Lindgren. If you have credit, then you can help me up, after having pulled me down.

Axel. That means that you demand help!

Lindgren. I only remind you of the fact that I am one of your sacrifices.

Axel. Then I beg you, by the gratitude I owe you, to be allowed to remind you: that you helped me with my examinations at the university, at a time when you had the money; that you had my thesis printed . . .

Lindgren. That I taught you the method of study which was to be the determining factor in your scientific career; that I who was, at that time, a person of orderly habits, worked advantageously on your careless nature; that, to be brief, I made something of you; and that, later, when I sought for the subsidy for the expedition, you came in my way and took it from me.

Axel. Received it. Because I was regarded as the man adapted to the undertaking and you were not.

Lindgren. And then it was all up with me. One is lifted up, and another is cast down! — Do you think that was acting kindly toward me?

Axel. It was ungrateful, as people say, but the great deed was accomplished, science was enriched, the honor of the Fatherland was increased, and new lands were opened up for the needs of coming generations.

Lindgren. Hello! — You have been practicing eloquence! — Do you know how unpleasant it is to be obliged to play the part of being used up and thrown away?

Axel. I imagine it must be just as unpleasant as to be the black ingrate, and I congratulate you that you are not in my false position. — Let us go back to existing conditions. — What can I do for you?

Lindgren. What do you think?

Axel. At this moment, nothing!

Lindgren. And the next moment, you will be gone again. And then I'll never get a chance to see you again.

(Pours out another glass of brandy.)

Axel. Do me the kindness not to empty the brandy bottle, so that the servants may not be suspicious of me.

Lindgren. For shame!

Axel. Do you think it is pleasant for me to have to reprove you here? Do you think so?

Lindgren. Look here! Will you get me a ticket to the castle this evening?

Axel. It pains me to be obliged to say that I think you would not be allowed to enter.

Lindgren. Because . . .

Axel. You are drunk!

Lindgren. Thank you, old friend! — Will you let me see your botanical collections?

Axel. No! I am going to arrange them myself for the benefit of the academy.

Lindgren. Your ethnographic collections, then?

Axel. No, they don't belong to me.

Lindgren. Then will you — give me twenty-five kronen?

Axel. I can't give you more than ten, as I possess but twenty, myself.

Lindgren. Oh, the devil!

Axel. This is the position of the man you envy! Do you think there is any one with whom I can enjoy myself? None! For those who are below me hate the man who has gone up, and those who are above, fear the man who has come from below.

Lindgren. Yes, you are most unfortunate! . . .

Axel. Well, let me tell you, after what I have gone through in the last half hour, I should be willing to change places with you. How at ease and unapproachable is the man who has nothing to lose; how interesting is the insignificant man, the man who has been misunderstood and passed by, how he awakens our sympathies! You have only to stretch forth your hand to get a nickel; you have only to offer your arm and you have a friend to hook theirs into it; and what a powerful party your kindred spirits make! Envidable person, who know not your own good fortune!

Lindgren. You are of the opinion, then, that I am so far down, and you, so high up. — Look here, perhaps you haven't happened to read this newspaper? (*Pulls out a newspaper.*)

Axel. No, and I don't wish to read it.

Lindgren. And yet you should read it, for your own good.

Axel. I certainly shall not do so, not even to give you pleasure. You say: come here and I will spit on you, and are naive enough to demand that I should really come. — Do you know: I have this moment arrived at the conviction that if I should meet you in a bamboo jungle, I should, without fail, stretch you out with my breech-loader.

Lindgren. I believe it of you, you beast of prey!

Axel. It is best never to settle up accounts with friends or with people with whom you have lived intimately, for you never know who has the most figures on the debit side. But if you will bring your account to me, I will examine it. — Do you think I wouldn't have seen before long, that behind your benevolence, lay an unconscious desire to make of me the strong arm you lacked, which should accomplish for you what you could not for your-

self? For I possessed the inventive faculty and initiative, while you possessed only money and a university education. I can congratulate myself that you did not eat me, and I am excusable for having eaten you, since I had no other choice than to eat or be eaten.

Lindgren. Beast of prey!

Axel. Rodent, that could not rise to be the beast of prey, — you would so gladly have been! At this moment, you do not wish yourself up with me, so much as you wish me down with you. If you have anything more of importance to add, hurry up with it; I am expecting a guest.

Lindgren. Your fiancée?

Axel. So you have sniffed that out too!

Lindgren. Yes, of course! And I know what Mary, the girl you deserted, thinks and says; and I know how things have gone with your brother and his wife . . .

Axel. Do you know my future fiancée? I am not yet engaged.

Lindgren. No, but I know the man to whom she is engaged.

Axel. What do you mean?

Lindgren. That she has been going with another man all this time — Oh, you didn't know it, then?

Axel (*listens for a sound in the hall*). Yes, I knew it, but I thought she had broken with him. — See here, won't you come back in a quarter of an hour? In the meantime I'll try to arrange your matter in some way.

Lindgren. Is that a nice way of showing me out?

Axel. No! It is an effort to discharge an obligation. In solemn earnest!

Lindgren. Then I'll go, and come back again. — Goodby for a while . . .

(*The waiter enters.*)

The waiter. A gentleman begs to be allowed to speak to you, Doctor.

Axel. Let him come in.

(*The waiter goes out, leaving the door open.*)

(*Cecilia's betrothed enters. He is dressed in black with the blue bands.*)

Lindgren (*observing him carefully*). Goodby, Axel! — Good luck to you! (*Goes out.*)

Axel. Goodby!

(*Cecilia's betrothed, embarrassed.*)

Axel. Whom have I the honor . . .

Cecilia's betrothed. My name is not a distinguished name like yours, and my errand is an affair of the heart . . .

Axel. Do you . . . You know Miss Cecilia?

Cecilia's betrothed. I am he.

Axel (hesitating, then decidedly). I pray you be seated. (*Opens the door and beckons to the waiter.*)

Axel (to the waiter). Have my account ready; pack my things in there, and order a hack in half an hour.

The waiter (bows and goes out). I will attend to it, Doctor.

Axel (goes over to Cecilia's betrothed, sits down on a chair). Pray tell me your errand.

Cecilia's betrothed (after a pause, unctuously). Two men lived in the same city, one rich, the other poor. The rich man had a great number of sheep and cattle; the poor man possessed nothing but a little lamb . . .

Axel. What concern of mine is that?

Cecilia's betrothed (as before) — a little lamb, that he had bought and raised . . .

Axel. This is too long! What do you want? Are you still engaged to Cecilia?

Cecilia's betrothed (changes suddenly). Have I said anything of any Cecilia? Have I?

Axel. Listen, sir, out with your errand, or you'll be shown out the door! And tell what you have to tell quickly, and to the point, without any twistings . . .

Cecilia's betrothed (offers his snuff). May I?

Axel. No, thank you!

Cecilia's betrothed. A great man has no small weaknesses like this.

Axel. Since you will not speak, I shall. It really doesn't concern you, but it may be useful for you to know, since you don't seem to know it: I am formally engaged to Miss Cecilia, your former fiancée.

Cecilia's betrothed (surprised). Former?

Axel. Yes, she has of course broken off her engagement to you.

Cecilia's betrothed. I know nothing of it.

Axel (takes a ring from his vest pocket). Inexplicable! You knew nothing of it? Well, now you know it. Here you see my ring.

Cecilia's betrothed. She has broken off her engagement to me?

Axel. Since she cannot be engaged to two men at once, and since she no longer loves you, of course, she had to break with you. I would have said all this much more politely, if you hadn't trodden on me when you came in.

Cecilia's betrothed. I didn't tread on you.

Axel. Cowardly and deceitful, sneaky and boastful!

Cecilia's betrothed (weakly). You are a hard man, Doctor!

Axel. No, I am not, but I shall be. You didn't spare my feelings before; you sneered, I didn't do that. Now, this conversation is at an end.

Cecilia's betrothed (with genuine emotion). She was my one lamb, and I feared you would take her away from me; but surely you will not, you who have so many . . .

Axel. Granted that I really wouldn't, are you sure that she would stay with you?

Cecilia's betrothed. Think of me, Doctor . . .

Axel. I will, if you will think of me.

Cecilia's betrothed. I am a poor man . . .

Axel. I am, too. But you, according to what I can see and hear, can expect constant bliss beyond this life. I cannot! — Beside that, I have taken nothing from you — only accepted what was offered me. Just as you did.

Cecilia's betrothed. And I, who had dreamed of a future for this girl, a future so bright . . .

Axel. Pardon me, if I say anything uncivil, since you are saying uncivil things; are you so sure, that the future of this girl might not be brighter at my side? . . .

Cecilia's betrothed. You remind me of my low social position as a laborer . . .

Axel. No, I only remind you of this girl's future, which lies so near to your heart, and since I am told that she no longer loves you but me, I take the liberty of dreaming that her future will be brighter with the man she loves than with the one she does not love.

Cecilia's betrothed. You are so strong and we smaller people are here to be sacrificed.

Axel. See here! I have been told you supplanted a rival in Cecilia's affections, and by none too honorable means. What do you think your sacrifice thought of you?

Cecilia's betrothed. He was a bad man.

Axel. From whom you saved the girl. Well, now I am saving her from you. Farewell!

(*CECILIA enters.*)

Cecilia's betrothed. Cecilia!

(*CECILIA starts back.*)

Cecilia's betrothed. You seem to be finding your way here already.

Axel (to Cecilia's betrothed). Take yourself off!

Cecilia. Give me a glass of water.

Cecilia's betrothed (lifts up the brandy bottle). The carafe seems to have been emptied. — Beware of this man, Cecilia!

Axel (pushes Cecilia's betrothed out of the door). Your presence here is absolutely unnecessary — go!

Cecilia's betrothed. Beware of this man, Cecilia! (*Goes.*)

Axel. That was a most uncomfortable incident, and you could have spared me it; first, by breaking with him openly, and then, by abstaining from visiting me in my rooms.

Cecilia (weeps). And now I have to listen to reproaches!

Axel. We had to discuss whose fault this was, and now that that is clear — let us talk of something else. — To begin with something: how are you?

Cecilia. So, so.

Axel. Then you are not ill?

Cecilia. How are you, yourself?

Axel. Very well, only a little tired.

Cecilia. Are you coming with me to my aunt's this afternoon?

Axel. No, I can't. I have to go away at noon.

Cecilia. That's nice! You go away so much, and I never go.

Axel. Hm!

Cecilia. Why do you say hm?

Axel. Because your remark made an unpleasant impression on me.

Cecilia. One has so many unpleasant impressions these days . . .

Axel. For example?

Cecilia. When you read the newspapers.

Axel. You read those scandalous stories about me! Do you believe them?

Cecilia. What are you to believe?

Axel. So you entertain a suspicion that I may be the infamous person described in them. If you are willing to marry me in spite of this, I can only believe that you would do it from purely practical motives and not because of any personal liking for me.

Cecilia. You speak so hardly, as if you had no opinion at all of me.

Axel. Cecilia! Will you go away from here with me in a quarter of an hour?

Cecilia. In a quarter of an hour? Where?

Axel. To London.

Cecilia. I will not travel with you until we have been married.

Axel. Why not?

Cecilia. Why should we go away in such a hurry?

Axel. Because — it is suffocating here. And if we remain, I shall be pulled down so low that I shall never rise again.

Cecilia. That would be queer! Is it so bad as that?

Axel. Will you go with me, or won't you go with me?

Cecilia. Not before we are married, for you'll never marry me afterward.

Axel. Do you believe that? — Sit down here a few minutes, while I go in and write one or two letters.

Cecilia. Do you want me to sit here alone, with the doors open?

Axel. Don't lock the door, if you do we are totally lost. (*Goes out, left.*)

Cecilia. Don't stay long! (*She goes to the door leading into the hall and turns the key.*)

(*CECILIA alone. Later MARY comes in through the door leading from the hall.*)

Cecilia. Wasn't the door locked?

Mary. No, not that I noticed! — Oho, so it should have been locked, should it?

Cecilia. Whom have I the honor?

Mary. And whom have I?

Cecilia. That doesn't concern you!

Mary. So aristocratic? I understand. It is you! And I have been sacrificed to you — until some one else comes.

Cecilia. I do not know you.

Mary. But I know you so much the better.

Cecilia (*rises, goes to the door left*). Indeed! (*Speaks to Axel.*) Come out a minute.

(*AXEL enters.*)

Axel (*to MARY*). What do you want here?

Mary. You never can tell.

Axel. Then go away.

Mary. Why?

Axel. Because everything has been at an end between us for three years.

Mary. And now there is another girl to be thrown out on the rubbish heap.

Axel. Did I ever make you a promise that I did not keep? Do I owe you anything? Did I ever speak of marriage? Did we have a child? Was I the only one in your favor?

Mary. And now he thinks he is the only one? With that girl, there?

Cecilia (goes up to MARY). Be still! — I do not know you.

Mary. But when we used to tramp round the streets, then we knew each other; and when we went to market we called each other thou. (*To AXEL.*) And you intend to marry that girl. Do you know what, you are much too good for her!

Axel (to CECILIA). Did you use to know this girl?

Cecilia. No!

Mary. Aren't you ashamed of yourself? At first I did not recognize you, because you looked so fine . . .

(*AXEL gazes steadily at CECILIA.*)

Cecilia (to AXEL). Come! I will go with you.

Axel (absentmindedly). Right-away! Just wait a few minutes. — I must go in and write one more letter. — But this time we will lock the door.

Mary. No, thank you, I don't wish to be locked in, the way she was before.

Axel (becoming attentive). Was the door locked before?

Cecilia (to MARY). Can you say that the door was locked?

Mary. As you thought it was locked, I took it for granted that you had locked it so carelessly that it opened . . .

Axel (looks searchingly at CECILIA, then says to MARY). Mary, you were a good girl, at least so it seemed to me. Will you give me back my letters?

Mary. No!

Axel. What do you want with them?

Mary. I have heard that since you have become such a celebrated man, I can sell them.

Axel. And then, you can revenge yourself with them.

Mary. Yes!

Axel. Is Lindgren . . .

Mary. Yes. — Here he is, himself.

(*Lindgren enters.*)

Lindgren (in a good humor). Just look! What a lot of girls! And Mary is here, like the roaches wherever there is a fish-spawn. Listen, Axel!

Axel. I hear you even if I don't see you. You are in a very good humor. What misfortune has happened to me?

Lindgren. I had overslept a little, it was some time before I felt like

myself, but I went down-stairs and had them bring me a beefsteak. — Yes! See here! — You don't really owe me anything (AXEL: *play of expression*), for what I did for you I did out of the goodness of my heart, and I have had both honor and pleasure in return. What you have received, you have received and not borrowed.

Axel. Now you are too meek and high-souled.

Lindgren. Don't say that. And now, service for service: will you sign this, as my security?

(AXEL *hesitates*.)

Lindgren. You needn't be afraid, I won't bring you into the dilemma that your brother . . .

Axel. What do you mean? It was I who brought misfortune on him . . .

Lindgren. The two hundred kronen, yes, but he gave you as his security for a five years' lease . . .

Axel. Good Lord!

Lindgren. What was that? — Hm, hm!

Axel (*looks at his watch*). Wait a few minutes, I must go in and write a few letters.

(CECILIA *is about to follow him*.)

Axel (*holds her back*). A few minutes, my dear friend . . . (*Kisses her on the forehead*.) A few minutes! (*Goes out, left*.)

Lindgren. Here is the paper. Sign this at the same time.

Axel. Give it here. (*Goes out resolutely to the left*.)

Lindgren. Well, are we on good terms now, little girls?

Mary. Yes, indeed. And before we go away from here, together, we'll be on still better terms.

(CECILIA: *play of expression*.)

Mary. I think I'd like to do something nice today.

Lindgren. Come with me; I'm going to get some money.

Mary. No.

(CECILIA *sits down, uneasily, near the door where AXEL went out and leans against it*.)

Lindgren. We'll go and look at the fireworks tonight, then we can see what a big man made of Bengal lights looks like; or don't you want to, Cissa? — You there!

Cecilia. Do you know, I shall be sick if I stay here.

Mary. It wouldn't be the first time.

Lindgren. Now quarrel, little girls, that'll give me something to listen to. Go ahead, make it hail round your ears — ha, ha!

(*Ture and his WIFE come in.*)

Lindgren. Look here! Old acquaintances! How are you?

Ture. Very well, thank you!

Lindgren. And the child?

Ture. The child?

Lindgren. Oh, you had forgotten it, had you? — Do you find it just as hard to retain names?

Ture. Names?

Lindgren. Signatures? — It's dreadful how slowly that man in there writes.

Ture. Is my brother, the doctor, in there?

Lindgren. Whether the doctor is in there, I do not know, but your brother went in there just now. — At all events, we can find out. (*Knocks at the door.*) Quiet as a grave. (*Knocks again.*) I'll go in. (*Goes in.*)

(*General tension and uneasiness.*)

Cecilia. What does this mean?

Mary. We shall see.

Ture. What has happened?

The wife. Something's the matter, — you'll see, he won't help us.

Lindgren (*comes out of the room with a bottle and some letters*). What is written on this? (*Reads the label on the bottle.*) Cyanide of potassium! — Look at that, how stupid he was, the sentimental dreamer, to go and take his life for so little.

(*General outcry.*)

So you weren't a beast of prey, my dear Axel! — But — (*Peeps through the door into the room.*) he isn't there — and neither are his things. So he has gone off. And the bottle is unopened — that means: he thought of taking his life, but then decided to do something else. — Well, here are the writings he left behind him.

'To Miss Cecilia —' seems to contain something round — probably an engagement ring —. Be so good!

'To my brother, Ture.' (*Holds the letter up to the light.*) — on blue paper — that's a draught for — the full amount. — May it do you good!

(*Cecilia's betrothed appears in the door to the right.*)

Ture (*who has opened his letter*). You see, he has helped us . . .

The wife. Yes, in that way, oh, yes!

Lindgren. And here's my note. — Without his signature! This was a strong man. Diable!

Mary. Then there'll be no fireworks.

Cecilia's betrothed. Was there nothing for me?

Lindgren. Why, certainly, a fiancée, over there. — What a man! To be able to bring such tangled affairs into order in each case! It vexes me, of course, that I let myself be cheated; but the devil take me, if I don't think I'd have done just the same — you, too, perhaps? Eh?

THE DEMON'S SHELL

Translated from the Japanese

BY YONE NOGUCHI

THIS miniature play is a specimen of the Japanese 'Kiogen,' a sort of primitive comedy or farce, often depending for their wit upon the play of words. The 'Kiogen' were an early popular form of dramatic entertainment among the Japanese. The term 'Kiogen' means 'Mad Words,' 'The Melon Thief,' a similar folk-farce, by the same translator, which was given in POET LORE for Spring 1904, was played recently by the students of the Imperial University in Tokyo.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

THE MASTER.

TARO.

Master. There is one who lives in this neighborhood. I have not sent him even a word for a long time now. I think I will send Taro to him as a messenger. Now I will call Taro and give him this order.

(TARO enters.) My reason for calling you is only to ask you kindly to see him for me, as I have sent him no word for a long time.

Taro. Very well.

Master. Now go quickly.

Taro. I understand.

Master. Go.

Taro. Well, what is this? I am ordered to go to him. Whenever he sent me as a messenger, he used to give me a cup of honorable saké. Why did he not give it to me today? I am pretty sure he has forgotten about it. I will go back, and try to remind him of it. Oh, my lord, are you there?

Master. Haven't you started yet?

Taro. I am going now. Why don't you send him your honorable letter?

Master. No, no, since I am sending you to him, I will not send him any letter; but you shall tell him as much as any letter might tell.

Taro. Then you will not send him your honorable letter?

Master. No, no.

Taro. Now, then, I will start.

Master. Go quickly.

Taro. Well!

Master. Go!

Taro. Well, what is this? Again, he didn't think of it. What shall I do? Well, 'tis so, 'tis so. It would be nothing for me to go without a drink just once. Now, I will go with the honorable message. But scarcely any man is glad to make a custom of such a thing. It would be hard for me, if it should become the custom. Let me go back once more, and try to say something which may remind him. I say, are you in? Are you there?

Master. Who is it?

Taro. I.

Master. Haven't you started yet?

Taro. Well, I am going now. You used to say often that you had forgotten that and this after I was gone. Nothing to forget today?

Master. No, no. I have forgotten nothing today.

Taro. Yes, yes, I fancy that you may have forgotten something. Think it over well.

Master. No, no. I have forgotten nothing today. But — ha, ha! I did forget something.

Taro. See now. You have forgotten something.

Master. You just wait there.

Taro. Very well.

Master. What is this? I couldn't understand why Taro made his 'little return' repeatedly. I used to give him a drink whenever I sent him off for a message, but I forgot it today. Therefore it appears he made the 'little return.' I think I will let him have it. Say, say, Taro, I have something for you.

Taro. Why, what may it be?

Master. I used to let you have a drink, but I had forgotten it. Drink a cup or two, and start.

Taro. Why, was it that you said you had forgotten?

Master. Yes, yes.

Taro. I thought that the thing you had forgotten must be something else. Never mind, if that is what you meant. Now I will go with the honorable message.

Master. Ah, here, here, if you go without taking the saké which I used to let you drink, my heart would be uneasy. Honestly, drink now and start!

Taro. But I feel rather embarrassed to take up the cup today.

Master. Well, why may that be?

Taro. It is this. I feel annoyed thinking that you might think that I made the 'little return' purposely because I wished to take a drink, pretending to ask you whether you would not give him your honorable letter, or whether you had not forgotten something.

Master. What? Why should I think such a thing? Come now, drink and start.

Taro. I will drink when I return then.

Master. No, no, by all means drink and start, since I always used to let you have a drink.

Taro. Are you saying that I must drink and go by all means?

Master. Yes, yes.

Taro. Then, shall I drink?

Master. I have brought a large cup so that it need not take a long time. So drink!

Taro. Will you put the wine bottle this way?

Master. No, no, let me pour the saké out into your cup!

Taro. It would be too extraordinary. Well, pour it out.

Master. Very good.

Taro. Oh, that will be enough.

Master. Indeed, there's enough.

Taro. Now, then, I will drink.

Master. That's good. (*TARO drinks five cups.*) Had you enough?

Taro. Oh, not any more.

Master. Then, I will put the bottle away.

Taro. Please take it away quickly. Well, well, what a lovely lord he is! Three large cups! Five large cups! (*Laughter.*)

Master. Say, say, why don't you start?

Taro. Where to?

Master. What is this? You ask where to? Why don't you start for his place?

Taro. To his place?

Master. Yes, yes.

Taro. How could I forget that? Now I will start. (*He tumbles down.*)

Master. What is this? It appears he got drunk.

Taro. I never get drunk. But as I sat down for a long time, I got palsied. Will you kindly take my hand?

Master. Very well, now get up!

Taro. Now!

Master. Ha, he got drunk.

Taro. No, no, I never get drunk. Well, don't you give me your honorable letter?

Master. No, no, since I send you to him, I will not send him a letter.

Taro. What, send no letter?

Master. No, no.

Taro. Well, then, I will tell him nicely.

Master. You tell him nicely.

Taro. Now I will go.

Master. Come back quickly.

Taro. Very well.

Master. Go.

Taro. Ha, ha! (*He laughs.*) Well, well! He is a lovely lord. He gave me three large cups, no, five large cups, sending me as a messenger to his place. Did I get drunk? I will go singing a little. (*He sings.*) Yes, this ought to be always one road, but today it appears to be two roads or three roads. I cannot go now. I will rest awhile. So!

* * *

Master. I sent Taro away as a messenger to his place, but he got so extraordinarily drunk. I feel uneasy. I will go after him, and see about it. I wish he may reach there safely. I feel uneasy. What is this? He is sleeping on the sidewalk. Well, well, he is a malicious fellow. What shall I do? Now, I have an idea. (*He takes out a demon's mask and puts it on TARO's face.*) When he wakes up, he will be frightened and 'crush his own liver.'

* * *

Taro. Ha, how well I slept! Bring me hot water! Bring me tea! What is this? I thought that here was my home. Why, this is the middle of the road. How came I to sleep here? Ha, that's it, that's it. I was given some saké when I was sent away to his place, and I got drunk, and

fell asleep here. Ha, I must have been sleeping with my head down, and so my head feels quite heavy. Now, I know that hereabouts is a fine spring of water. I will go there, and wash my face, and drink the water. Well, well, how drunk I did get! How mindlessly I got drunk. Well, then, so it is! I will drink the water. (*He looks down into the water.*) Ah, how sad, how sad, how sad! Pray, spare my life! On my lord's business I was sent to a certain place, and as I got drunk, I fell asleep. Please spare my life! Pray, why don't you say a word? I am vexed not to have you say a word. Say just one word that you excuse me. Oh, pray! (*He slowly lifts his head toward the water, and instantly slips back.*) Oh, oh, how fearful, how fearful! The solemn demon is in the spring water. Shall I go back quickly, and tell my lord about this? Since he is a careful man, he will ask me whether I can certify to it by sure seeing. I cannot say that I can. Though it is a fearful thing, I will make sure of it. Ha, I pray that it will not jump out. (*He approaches on tiptoe, and peeps in.*) Ah, how sad, how sad! Pray, spare my life! Oh, pray, why don't you say a word? Oh, pray! Well, I cannot understand. I am sure there is a demon. But, why doesn't it jump out? I will see it once more. (*He looks into the water slowly, and, frightened, draws back a little. He thinks it stranger this time, seeing that it is his own face. He causes his sleeves, his one hand, and then both his hands to be reflected in the water. Finding that it was nothing but his own shadow, he cries out and steps back.*) Ah, ah, it was not the demon that I saw in the spring water, but my own face that is strangely turned into a demon's face. I had no thought of ill toward any person to this day, and why in the world was I turned into a demon? Now, what must I do? Oh, well, well, if I remain standing here idly like this, the people will see me, and maybe will beat me to death, saying the demon has appeared. Anyhow, my lord is my friend, and I will go to him, and entreat him to feed me for my lifetime. Well, well, I cannot help it! Surely he will 'crush his liver' when he sees this face. Now, somehow I got back. I will tell him that I have returned, hiding my face. Ah, my lord, are you in? Taro has returned.

Master. Ah! yes, did Taro return? Taro, you got back, you got back?

Taro. I have returned.

Master. Yes, you got back?

Taro. Just now I have returned.

Master. Ah, how fearful! The solemn demon has come! Go away quickly! Go away quickly!

Taro. I say, I am no demon. This is your Taro.

Master. Don't tell a story. I do not know of any demon Taro. Go away quickly!

Taro. But it is not so. My face may be a demon, but my heart is your same Taro. Can't you hear my own voice? Please keep me for my lifetime!

Master. I do not want a demon's service. Go away quickly!

Taro. You may not keep me for the service I gave till today, but I will now serve as your child's nurse.

Master. How can you be my child's nurse, having such a face as that? Go away quickly!

Taro. Then you will command me to be your gate-guard.

Master. Nobody will be going and coming if you guard the gate with such a face.

Taro. I cannot help it. I will build a fire under your honorable pot.

Master. No, no, I cannot keep a fellow with such a face. Go away quickly! There, begone, begone, begone! (*TARO cries.*)

Taro. Well, well, even a kind-hearted lord on whom I depended to say such a thing, and treat me like that! Wherever I go, nobody will keep me. Oh, what must I do? Ah, well, well, I was turned like this, when I went anear the spring water. I will go there and drown myself, rather than to be beaten and killed by people. Well, well, I cannot help it! I did not think ill of any person, and why in the world did I turn to such a shape as this? Here is the spring water already. Now I will run in from this place. Now! (*His mask drops.*)

* * *

Taro. Ah, pray, are you in? Are you in?

Master. What?

Taro. Here is the strangest thing.

Master. What is that?

Taro. Shall I show it to you?

Master. Show it to me!

Taro. Very well.

Master. Now.

Taro. Look! Here is the demon's shell.

Master. What? The demon's shell?

Taro. Yes.

Master. Let me run off!

Taro. No, I will not let you go, I will not let you go.

LITTLE MERET

GREEN-COAT HENRY'S STORY

BY GOTTFRIED KELLER

Translated from the German by Lilaise R. Smith

THE STORY of little Meret is taken from Gottfried Keller's autobiographical romance, 'Der Grune Heinrich.' 'Green-coat Henry' is the story of Keller's own childhood and youth, a childhood and youth spent in the most cramped conditions. The book tells the faithful story of the struggles and hardships of the widow, and the boy who was so gifted and ambitious, but so long unable to help his mother with the problem of daily living. But it does far more than that. We do not simply walk the Zurich streets, and eat the Swiss black bread with Green-coat Henry, we 'live in his heart,' we see the world as he saw it, a world in which the realism of daily life is transfigured and made wonderful by a spiritual beauty which is indescribable.

Der Grune Heinrich is in no way different from any other boy. There is not a single youthful folly or vanity of which he is not guilty. These follies are related with the most exquisite humor, but never was there a human soul more beautiful and appealing than the soul which is laid bare for us here; or, rather, any human soul which could be revealed for us, as Keller has revealed the soul of his Green-coat Henry, would be as beautiful and appealing.

It is Green-coat Henry who tells us the story of little Meret, in connection with his childish religious experience. The real Grune Heinrich used to see her picture hanging in a neighbor's attic, and he has immortalized the little figure that haunted his childish fancy in this his earliest, and in its second form, last book.

There is a psychological truth in the story of this child, which we can never appreciate too fully. One who has sorrowed for the little Meret will treat more tenderly the next sensitive child soul with which he comes in contact.

After my father died my mother felt that we were absolutely dependent upon the 'God of the widows and fatherless,' and so it seemed to her that we, of all others, should take pains to neglect no religious ceremony or

service. She resolved to have grace at meals. So one Sunday noon when we sat down to the table, she recited a little old prayer used by the common people, and bade me say it over after her. How surprised she was when I stammered out the first words, and then suddenly stopped, and could go no further.

The food was steaming on the table, there was not a sound in the room, my mother was waiting, but I did not speak. She repeated her command, but it was no use, I only sat there, dumb and overwhelmed with humiliation, and she let it pass for that time as a simple child's whim.

But on the next day the episode was repeated, and now she was really troubled, and asked me, 'Why won't you pray? Are you ashamed to?' That was truly the case, but I could not answer 'yes,' because after all I was not ashamed in the way she meant. The food on the table was no longer food; in my eyes it was a sacrificial meal, the folding of the hands and the solemn prayer before the smoking dishes had turned into a ceremony from which I felt an unconquerable aversion. I was not such a hardened sinner that I was ashamed to confess my religion before the world, as the priests say, — and how should I be afraid of my mother, from whose mildness I never dreamed of concealing anything? It was simply that I could not bear to speak aloud to the Almighty God; and from that day I have never been able, even in the remotest solitude, to pray aloud.

'Then you shall not eat until you have prayed,' my mother said, and I climbed down from my chair, and went away into the corner, where I stood, feeling very sad, and a little defiant. My mother sat still in her place, and made a pretence of eating. And I felt a sort of dismal tension between us, which made my heart very heavy. Soon my mother got up from the table and began to carry out the dishes. She went back and forth in silence, but when it was almost time for me to go to school, she brought my dinner in again. She was wiping her eyes as she had gotten something in them, and she said 'Here is something for you to eat, you wilful child!' And then I, too, burst into sobs and tears, but the food tasted very good when my crying fit was over. As I was walking back to school I did not fail to send up to God a happy sigh of thanksgiving for this deliverance and reconciliation.

Years afterwards when I was visiting in my parents' native village, this episode in my childhood was vividly recalled to me by the story of a child who had lived there more than a hundred years before.

In one corner of the church yard was a small stone tablet with nothing on it but a scarcely distinguishable coat of arms, and the date, 1713. The people

called the spot beside it the 'witch child's grave,' and they told all sorts of strange stories about her. She was a city child, and belonged to a noble family, but she was banished to this country parsonage, in which at that time a severe and pious clergyman lived, in the hope that he could cure her of her godlessness, and mysterious, precocious witchcraft. But he had not succeeded. For one thing he had never been able to make her speak the three names of the Holy Trinity. She had continued in this stubborn godlessness, and died miserably. She was an extraordinarily lovely and intelligent little girl, of the tender age of seven years, but all the same she was a most wicked witch. She laid her spell upon grown men especially, so that if they so much as looked at the little child they fell desperately in love with her, and stirred up all sorts of disturbances on her account.

She made mischief with the birds, enticed all the village doves to the parsonage, and even bewitched the pious gentleman himself, so that he caught them, and ate them roasted, to his own hurt. She charmed the fish in the river, sitting all day long on the bank, and dazzling the wise old trout, until they swam round and round her unceasingly, their backs flashing in the sunlight.

The old women used the legend of this child-witch to frighten the children, when they were naughty, adding all sorts of fabrications. But there really hung in the parsonage an old dim oil-painting, which preserves the likeness of this strange child.

It is a portrait of a wonderfully beautiful little girl. She wears a bluish green damask gown. Her wide, flaring skirt hides her feet. A golden chain is twisted around her waist, and hangs down to the floor in front. On her head she wears a crown-shaped headdress of shimmering gold and silver tinsel, interwoven with silk threads and pearls. She holds in her hand a child's skull and a white rose.

I have never seen anywhere such a beautiful, spiritual, lovable child's face. It is pointed, not plump, and it wears an expression of great sadness. The mournful shining dark eyes look out at you, as if beseeching you for help, while around the firmly-closed lips there hovers the suggestion of a roguish smile.

The child's heavy suffering has given her whole face a look of maturity and womanliness, which stirs you with an involuntary longing to see the living child,— to be able to take her into your arms and cherish her.

The real story is this.

The little girl belonged to a highly aristocratic and orthodox family. She showed a stubborn aversion to prayer, and worship of every sort . . .

tore up the prayerbooks they gave her to learn from . . . covered her head with the bedclothes when they tried to make her say her prayers . . . and shrieked with terror, when they took her into the cold dark church, saying she was afraid of the black man in the pulpit.

She was the child of an unhappy first marriage, and might easily have been the cause of unpleasantness in any case. So the family made the experiment, since no measures they took against this mysterious stubbornness were of any avail, of giving the child into the care of this minister, who was widely famed for his strict orthodoxy.

If the child was a source of sorrow and disgrace in the eyes of her own family, much more was she regarded by this severe dogmatic man as possessed of an infernal spirit, against which he must enter upon a deadly warfare. He shaped his conduct accordingly.

An old diary has been preserved in the parsonage, which was kept by the pious clergyman himself. On its old gilt-edged leaves are some entries which tell of his experiences, and of the fate of this unhappy child.

THE DIARY

‘Today, received the first quarter’s payment from the honorable and God-fearing Frau M., immediately receipted it, and dispatched my report.

‘Further dispensed to little Meret her weekly punishment which fell due upon this day. I increased the severity of the aforesaid punishment, inasmuch as I laid her upon a settle, and chastised her with a fresh switch, not without inward lamentations and beseechings of the Lord that He would bring this sorrowful undertaking to a favorable conclusion. The child, for a truth, cried piteously, and humbly begged for pardon, but none the less, she continued in her stiff-neckedness, and threw the hymn book I had given her to learn from upon the floor. I then allowed her a few minutes’ respite, and put her under arrest in the dark smoke-shed, where she whimpered and complained,—afterwards became quiet, then suddenly began to sing and make jubilation, not otherwise than after the manner of the three holy men in the fiery furnace. Went to the smoke-house and listened, and discovered that she was singing the psalms in meter, namely the very songs she had just refused to learn; but in such a vain and worldly fashion, after the manner of nurses’ lullabies or children’s rhymes, that I was forced to look upon this behavior as a new piece of wantonness and a fresh device of the devil’s.’

Further:

‘A most lamentable letter has arrived from Madame, who is truly

a most excellent person and well-grounded in the faith. She had wet the afore-mentioned letter with her tears; and she also communicated to me her honored husband's great anxiety over the little Meret's case. And it is truly a great calamity which has come upon this highly reputable and exalted family, and one might be of the opinion (speaking with due respect) that the sins of the Sir grandpapa on the father's side, who was a great wanton and light-minded cavalier, are being atoned for by this unhappy creature. Have changed my mode of dealing with the child and will now try the starvation treatment. Also I have had a little dress of coarse sack-cloth made by my worthy consort's own hands, and forbidden little Meret to wear any other garment, inasmuch as this penitent's garb is the most fitting for her. Obstinacy on the same point.

Found myself forced to debar the little Demoiselle from all dealings and intercourse with the country children, because she ran away into the woods with the aforesaid children. While there she bathed in the pond, hung up the penitent's dress I had devised for her on the branch of a tree, and stirred up her companions to bold and unseemly mirth.—Severe punishment.

'Today a great scandal and vexation. There came to the house a great strapping fellow, young Mullerhans, and took me to task for my treatment of little Meret, claiming that he hears her crying and screaming every day; and I was dealing with him, when in came the good-for-nothing young schoolmaster, threatening to bring a complaint against me. And he forthwith fell upon the wicked creature, and caressed and fondled her. I straightway made the schoolmaster to be arrested and brought before the magistrate. Must take like measures against Mullerhans, though same is rich and influential. Am almost forced to believe, myself, that the child is a witch, as the country people say she is, only such a belief is contrary to all reason. At all events the devil has taken possession of her and I have a woeful undertaking on my hands.

'This week we have entertained in the house a painter sent hither by Madame to paint the portrait of the little Miss. The afflicted family do not wish to receive the creature again, but they desire to preserve a likeness of her, as a sorrowful memorial, and a useful object of penitential contemplation, and also on account of the child's great beauty. The gentleman is exceeding set on the idea. My honored spouse serves to the painter two pints of wine every day, but he does not seem to get enough, for he goes to the "Red Lion" every evening to play with the Chirurgeon. This painter is a haughty individual, and for this reason I often set before him

a partridge or a pike, which shall be duly noted in Madame's quarterly account. He began by paying court to the little Miss, and she soon showed such a foolish attachment to him that I was forced to request him not to interfere with my mode of procedure. When they brought the child her Sabbath array (which we had preserved with all care) for the picture, and put on her girdle and headdress, she gave evidence of the greatest delight, and straightway began to dance about. But her joy was soon turned to mourning, when in accordance with the command of her mamma I caused a man's skull to be brought and placed in the child's hand, which skull she at first refused to take and being compelled, she held it with trembling and weeping, not otherwise than if it were a piece of red-hot iron. The painter assured us he could paint the skull without a model, inasmuch as it belonged to the first rudiments of his art:—But would not yield, seeing that Madame had written: "In whatever the child suffers, we suffer also. If we have been given an opportunity for doing penance by permitting her to suffer, we perform this penance for her sake. Therefore your reverence will not omit the execution of any commands we shall give in regard to her care and her education. If, as I pray the Almighty and Compassionate God, she should sometime, either in this world or the next, be enlightened and redeemed, she would, without doubt, greatly rejoice that a good share had already been performed of her penance for the hardness of heart it has pleased the Infinite Father to bring upon her."

'With these excellent words before my eyes, I resolved to impose a serious penance upon the child by means of the skull.

'In the end they procured a small, light child's skull, since the painter complained that the large one was too heavy for the little hands, in consideration of the rules for proportion of his art. She held this skull without making any complaint. The painter added a white rose which I could well suffer, since it may serve as an edifying symbol.

'Today have received a sudden counter-order in regard to the portrait, and am not to expedite same to the city, but am to keep it in my own house. It is a sinful waste, for the painter had done a highly excellent piece of work, being quite carried away by the child's beauty. If I had only known in the beginning, the man might have painted my own presentment upon the canvas for the money, even if I had been obliged to charge him nothing for the handsome victuals we have given him, but to let them serve as additional compensation for my portrait.

'Further notice has come to me, namely: to suspend all worldly instruction, especially the instruction in the French language, seeing that the child

will never have any occasion for such knowledge; also my wife is to make an end of the lessons on the spinet. The child is greatly grieved. From this time forth she is to be treated as a simple foundling, and our only care is to be that she makes no open disturbance.

‘Day before yesterday the little Meret ran away, and threw us into the greatest distress of mind, until at noon today she was spied at the top of Beech Hill, where she was sitting, warming herself in the sun, having taken off her sackcloth garment. She had all unbraided her hair, and set on her head a wreath of beech leaves, and hung a scarf of ditto over her body; also she had beside her on the ground a pile of fine strawberries, off which she had dined very pleasantly and sufficiently. When she caught sight of us she started for the woods again, but she was ashamed of her nakedness, and stopped to put on her dress, so was luckily captured. She is sick and seems to be out of her head, for she is not able to give any intelligible answers.

‘Little Meret is better, but she grows more and more strange. Is stupid and silent most of the time. The opinion of the medical man is that she will become demented or idiotic, and will soon be no longer susceptible to medical treatment. He promised to put her on her feet again if we would place her in his house. But it is my observation that the Monsieur Surgeon is concerned only with the large bill he can present for board, and with the presents that Madame will make. Accordingly I answered him to this effect, that the Lord seemed to be nearing the accomplishments of His purposes for His creature, and human hands might not and dared not intermeddle with the Divine plans. As is assuredly the truth.’

After an interval of five or six months comes the following entry:

‘The child seems to enjoy excellent health in her imbecile condition, and has gotten the most shining red cheeks. She stays all day now in the bean vines, where she is out of our sight; and what is more, no one troubles about her, as long as she makes no disturbance.

‘Little Meret has arranged a little salon for herself in the middle of the vines,—so we have discovered,—and there she receives visits from the farmers’ children, who smuggle in fruit for her, and other food, which she buries very neatly, and keeps for further use. We have also found buried here the little child’s skull; it has been lost for a long time, and so could not be returned to the sexton. She has enticed sparrows and other birds to the place, and tamed them, so that they have already done great hurt to the garden. And yet I cannot shoot into the garden any more, because

she stays there. In the same way she has bewitched a poisonous snake, which has made its way through the hedge, and taken up its abode with her. Finally,—to make conclusion, we have taken her into the house again, and now keep her in confinement.

‘Little Meret has lost her red cheeks, and the doctor states that in his opinion she is not much longer for this world. Have dispatched a letter to the parents.

‘This morning before daylight poor little Meret must have left her bed, slipped out into the garden, and passed away there, for we found her dead in a little hollow she had dug out in the ground, apparently for the sake of concealing herself. She was quite stiff, her hair and gown wet and heavy with the dew which lay in shining drops on her pink cheeks, just as on an apple blossom. And we were filled with horror; and I have been thrown into great confusion and embarrassment today by the arrival of their excellencies from the city, just after my consort had departed for K. to purchase some provisions and delicacies for their fitting entertainment. Hardly knew which end my head was on, and there was great scurrying and running about, and the maids had to wash and dress the little corpse, and all at the same time prepare a suitable luncheon. Finally I had the fresh ham baked that my spouse put to pickle eight days ago, and had Jacob catch three of the tame trout, which still occasionally come to the garden, although the sainted (?!) Meret had not been allowed to go down to the water for some time. Have happily with these dishes managed to set before them a respectable meal, and Madame seemed to find it to her taste.

‘We have been exceeding mournful, and passed more than two hours in prayer and meditation upon death, also in melancholy discourse upon the unhappy illness of the dead girl, for we must now believe, to our great consolation, that both mind and body have always been mortally diseased. Then we talked of her otherwise highly brilliant disposition, of her frequent graceful sallies and fancies, and we could not reconcile it all in our earthly short-sightedness. Tomorrow morning they will give the child Christian burial. The presence of the distinguished parents at this time is very fortunate, since otherwise the deacons would probably have made objections.

‘This has been the strangest, the most frightful day I have ever spent, not only since I have been concerned with this unhappy creature, but in my whole otherwise peaceful existence. When the hour had come and it had struck ten, we went in procession behind the body to the churchyard, while Sigrist rang the children’s chimes, which he did not do with much

diligence, for he rang most piteously, and the sound was blown away by strong and disagreeable wind. The sky was all dark and overcast, and the churchyard deserted except for our little company. But outside all the country people were gathered, and they stuck their heads over the wall in great curiosity. When the little coffin was being let down into the grave a strange cry was heard from inside the coffin, so that we were most violently terrified, and the grave-digger took to his heels. But the surgeon, who had run up, unfastened the lid, and took it off, and the dead child sat up like a live person, and crawled out of the grave all of a tremble, and stood and looked at us. And as at the same time the rays of Phœbus broke through the clouds in a most strange and lurid manner, the girl, in her brocade and glittering crown, looked like a fairy or a kobold's child. The lady, her mamma, immediately fell into a severe fainting fit, and Herr von M. sank to the ground weeping. I myself could not move from astonishment and terror and at the instant almost believed in witchcraft.

'But the little girl soon recovered herself and rushed away from the graveyard, and out through the village like a cat, so that all the people flew home in terror, and bolted their doors. School was just out, and a throng of children on the streets. And when the little brats saw the thing, they could not be kept back, but a whole troop of them ran after the corpse and followed it, and after them ran the schoolmaster with his ferrule. But she had twenty paces advantage, and did not stop until she reached Beech Hill, and there she fell down lifeless, whereupon the children gathered around the body and stroked and caressed it, but to no avail.

'All this we heard of by report, inasmuch as we, in dire straits, took refuge in the parsonage and waited there in deep desolation until they brought the body home again. They placed it on a mattress, and the gentlefolk started immediately for home, leaving behind them a little stone on which there is engraved simply the family arms and the date.

'Now the child again lies as if dead, and we are not able to go to our beds because of our fear. The doctor is sitting beside her, and he is now of the opinion that she has at last entered into rest.

'Today, after various experiments, the doctor declared her to be dead, beyond a doubt, and she has now been laid away, and nothing more has happened.'

PHEDRE

After Seeing Bernhardt

*' Ou me cacher? Fuyons dans la nuit infernale.
Mais que dis-je ? Mon pere y tient l'urne fatale;
Le sort, dit-on, l'a mise en ses severes mains;
Minos juge aux enfers tous les pales humains.'*

BY ARTHUR UPSON

INCORPORATE passion and dark tower of flame
Blown by the torment of supreme despair!
What violence do those divine ones dare
To this lone-quivering, silent woman-shame,
Themselves secure, down-gazing on her fame
From cruel, remote, serene Olympian air!
What purpose rules the gods! Sit they and stare
Like madmen, striking virtue down with blame?
Or are there splendid spirits of mankind
Wrought of a finer metal than will flow
To the rich mould of immortality
Without the blasting fire, and crucibles' glow,
The writhing of the alloys as they flee,
Leaving the true gold thrice on thrice refined?

NAY, not such thou, blind daughter of the Sun!
Thou art pure flame, fire's deepest furnace-bloom,
And wast create thine own soul to consume
Ere, cast from that ancestral burning one,
Thy woes on the chill earth were yet begun;
For the deliberate Fates had spoke thy doom;
Lo, ere the recess of that throbbing womb
Teemed with the brood of Minos, it was done!
Such is thy soul, a self-devouring star,
Whose embers in the dull, Medean drink
Are quenched, and whom no shades at Minos' bar
Shall crowd around, nor ever dread of night,
Nor wrath of gods shall make thy spirit shrink:
Thou hast thy boon — thou art extinguished quite.

IBSEN'S BRAND

AN INTERPRETATION

BY JANE DRANSFIELD STONE

IN September, 1865, Ibsen wrote to Bjornsterne Bjornson from Ariccio, a village eighteen miles southeast of Rome, where he was then living: 'Things are going well with me now; and they have really been doing so the whole time, except on the one or two occasions when I have been at my wits' end, not only where to turn for money, but with regard to my work also. It would make no progress. Then one day I strolled into St. Peters,—I had gone to Rome on an errand,—and there I suddenly saw in strong and clear outlines the form of what I had to say. I threw to the winds all that I had been unavailingly torturing myself with for a whole year, and in the middle of July began something new, which progressed as nothing has ever progressed with me before. The work is new, in the sense that I only began to write it then, but the subject and the mood have been weighing on me like a nightmare ever since the many lamentable political occurrences at home first made me examine myself and the condition of our national life, and think about things that before had passed me lightly by. It is a dramatic poem, modern in subject, serious in tone, five acts in rhymed verse. The fourth act is now nearly finished, and the fifth I feel I can write in a week. I work both in the morning and the afternoon, a thing I have never been able to do before. It is delightfully peaceful here; we have no acquaintances; I read nothing but the Bible—it has vigor and power.'

This new work was 'Brand,' and I quote the passage in full because of the light it throws upon the creative impulse of the poem. In the following spring 'Brand' was published, immediately attaining an immense popularity. Throughout Norway and soon throughout Scandinavia, it was read, studied, and quoted, a success due, however, more to a narrow pietistical interpretation of its meaning than to a real understanding of its motive and bearing. 'You surely will not blame me because the book may have given pietism something to lean on,' writes Ibsen to Brandes.* Norway in 1865 received its tone from the peasant class, not only in politics, but in religion and art. The romantic movement had made the peasant

*To Geog Brandes, from Dresden, 15th July, 1869.

an object of interest and study, and it was not long before he became conscious of his opportunities, and began to make himself a vital factor in national politics. Hence arose a crude and over-enthusiastic nationalism and a conventional and utilitarian view of society that Ibsen had little sympathy with. Georg Brandes, in his 'Second Impression' (1882), makes a searching analysis of the dramatist's attitude at this time. 'The air around him resounded with words that expressed ideals; they spoke of everlasting love, deep earnestness, the courage of faith, firmness of character, Norwegianness,' but Ibsen 'found nothing in the world of reality that answered to these words.' Sick at heart, weighted and oppressed by the low ideals, and lethargy of his countrymen, Ibsen left Norway, not to return for permanent residence for twenty-five years.

On his way south into Italy, he passed through Denmark, just after its defeat by Prussia in the war over Schleswig-Holstein. He writes to Hansen: 'About the time of my arrival at Copenhagen, the Danes were defeated at Dybbol. In Berlin I saw King William's triumphal entry with trophies and booty. During those day 'Brand' began to grow within me like an embryo.* Ibsen had felt that Norway had shamelessly broken faith in not aiding the Danes in this struggle. The king had given his word, but a decision of the *Storting* had tied his hands. It is true that the Norwegians at this time were in no position to give effectual aid, but, nevertheless, Ibsen seemed to feel they should have tried, and blamed them for their inaction.

'Kinsfolk, lo, to battle riding,
While their gentle brothers hiding,
From the hat on darkness peep.'

Throughout the poem this note of indignation is dominant. The Norwegians are depicted as a nation of 'pocket-edition' souls, of 'sluggard spirits, souls of lead,' against whom Brand pits his will, armed with his terrible formula 'all or nothing.' Men must be made to feel the insufficiency of their present lives to satisfy the demands of heaven; must be taught dissatisfaction with half measures and devotion to some worthy cause. Three types of men, 'a triple-banded foe,' he will wage war against 'Faint-heart,' exemplified in the peasant who will not risk his life to lead the priest to give the last sacrament to his dying daughter; 'Light-heart,' in Einer, the artist, who thoughtlessly worships an inherited idea of God, and consecrates his life to gayety, though converted later to a shallow evangelicalism; and 'Wild-heart,' in the young gypsy girl, Gerd, so strangely

* To Peter Hansen, from Dresden, 28th October, 1870.

related to Brand, and destined to influence his life in its crisis. Gerd, who worships in the 'Ice-church,' fears the falcon, and finds 'foul things fair.' Against these Brand will wage 'war front and rear, war high and low.'

Such are the people. The official class is also scourged, sometimes with a light touch of satire, then again with denunciation, the weight of the lash proportioned to the offence. Where is there a more amusing picture than that of the mayor, who never works outside of his own Division, with his wonderful schemes for building an 'arrest-house,' 'pest-house,' and 'guest-house,' all under one roof, his chatter about the glory of Norway in King Bele's reign, and his watchword 'moderation.' He is a product of the weak humanitarianism then prevalent. He is a good man, a faithful father and husband, a trusty official, an ideal servitor of the people, one would say, yet Brand calls him a scourge upon the land.

'How many an eager will made numb,
How many a valiant song struck dumb,
By such a narrow soul as this!'

The representative of organized religion, the Dean, is not sketched with as kindly satire. To consider the church simply a function of government, making all the uses of it 'to the State's advantage tend,' was to Ibsen an intolerable condition, crushing individual effort, and bringing all men to a dead level.

'All men to step alike, and beat
The self-same music with their feet.'

Ibsen has often been blamed for his lack of patriotism. Unlike Bjornson, that giant of energy and idol of the people, who has worked body and soul for Norwegian nationality, he has ever held himself aloof from party politics. His peculiar and often misunderstood views upon democracy and governments have subjected him to much criticism, and he has been called a socialist, and even anarchist. Ibsen, however, is too much of an individualist to admit of any arbitrary classification. It is true he has declared, 'the state must go,' not, however, in this present era, by bomb-throwing and bloodshed, but in the future, when men, having attained individual personality, having worked out their own salvation, will recognize that 'spiritual relationship is the only thing that makes for unity.' The accidental, or rather circumstantial fact of a number of people living in the same locality, does not argue for nationality as much as racial kinship. To Ibsen the Jews were the greatest nation, and he grew to feel himself not a Norwegian only, not a Scandinavian only, but a Teuton. He believed in liberty, not liberties; individualism, not democracy.

‘The state is (what you hardly dream)
 Exactly half republican;
 Liberty held in strictest ban,
 Equality in high esteem.
 Yet is equality never won
 But by destroying More and Less.’

Consequently to Brand, who Ibsen has said ‘is myself in my best moments,’* the Dean’s twaddle about church and state, his arguments for wont and use, his views on profitable religion, are ‘vacant and vain.’ The Dean is shallow and rhetorical, without the slightest comprehension of idealism, such as Brand’s or of true religion, yet it is he to whom the people return, as sheep to a shepherd, when they no longer can scale the heights to which Brand’s uncompromising ideal would lead them.

The idealism of Brand has for its keynote what Wicksteed, in his most able study of the poem, calls the ‘formula of elimination,’ ‘all or nothing.’

‘Know that I am stern to crave,
 All or nothing I will have.’

and in the logical working-out of its inexorable demands lies the tragedy of the play. Brand’s divine mission to ‘make the sick earth grow sound again’ is not to be carried out by half-measures. The gentle palliatives of humanitarianism, or the sweet benefits of love, but by will.

‘You must *first* will! Not only things
 Attainable, in more or less,
 Not only where the action brings
 Some hardship and some weariness:
 No, you must will with flashing eyes
 Your way through all earth’s agonies.’

In this resolute will, this unbending and unflinching devotion to a cause, even though it become a lost cause, as it does, lies Brand’s strength. We find him hard, we think him wrong, but we feel him great. ‘How he towered as he spoke,’ said Agnes, at their first meeting. There is something Titanic about him. He is a northern Prometheus, who would aid men with fire from heaven, though they do not understand its use, and chained to the rock of his idealistic formula, his heart is eaten out daily by misunderstanding on the one side, and on the other by his own half-realized doubt of himself, a doubt only fully faced in the crisis of his life.

Because Brand is a priest, his ‘All or Nothing’ means willing an absolute service to God. Had he been an artist, his call would have been

* To Peter Hansen, 28th October, 1870.

to an absolute devotion to art, for to him 'whole' virtue is the result of a whole will, the power of being something all in all. It is St. Paul's 'This one thing I do.'

'Be passion's slave, pleasure's thrall,
But be it utterly, all in all!
Be not today, tomorrow, one,
Another when the year is gone;
Be what you are with all your heart,
And not by pieces and in part.'

Consequently we cannot connect Brand's zeal with a narrow evangelicalism, or devotion to this or that dogma of the church.

'That I'm a Christian, even, I doubt;
That I'm a man, though, I know well.'

His God is not a 'dotard or dreamer verging on second infancy,' but stern, implacable, young like Hercules, a worker of miracles, and leader to battles; and as the play progresses seems to grow into a heathen monster, daily demanding a human sacrifice to appease an abnormal appetite for suffering and pain. To this idea of God, Brand first sacrifices his mother, refusing her the comfort of the last sacrament, because she will not give up to the last farthing her ill-gotten gains.

'Dock the gold-calf as she will,
Say, it remains an idol still.'

She dies muttering that God is no hard dealer like her son. Divine pity, hitherto unknown, is, however, entering Brand's heart through the influence of Agnes, a character as pure, tender and exalted as Shakespeare's Cordelia. From the time she comes dancing across the mead, 'a butterfly young and bright,' to the consummation of her martyrdom, she permeates the poem, like the subtle perfume of a flower. Her power of self-sacrifice is no less than Brand's, but while he gives through will, through an inner necessity to be true to his ideal, she gives through love. She tries to believe with him that willing is the first necessity, yet within herself she is ever questioning, 'Is it after all?'—and through this influence doubt of his own rightness creeps into Brand's mind.

'Jesus, Jesus, give me light,' he cries, when Agnes, abiding by his decision of duty, raises their little son Alf in her arms, in sacrifice to Brand's God. His formula is beginning to react upon himself, and he feels its deadly sting. Yet he does not flinch, even when the victim is his beloved Agnes herself. 'I have never yielded,' he says of himself. Nor does he yield, and the weary one who had fought out all her might in trying to

realize an impossible ideal, sinks beside her little son. Nowhere in all literature are found scenes of more poignant grief, and yet spiritual exaltation, than here in the third and fourth acts of 'Brand.' Aristotle's demand that tragedy purge the feelings through fear and pity is unreservedly met. We fear for 'the hapless blossom, laid within the pitiless grasp of such a lord!' We pity her, and yet we pity Brand too, that soul 'storm-stressed' who cannot find tears, that inexorable will that cannot yield!

Besides the formula, another element influences Brand's conception of his duty. It is the element of fatalism, or rather, perhaps, the power of the past over the present, a theme later worked out to its finality in 'Ghosts.' I have mentioned the gipsy girl, Gerd, as being strangely related to Brand. In her youth, Brand's mother sent away the poor man she loved in order to marry another of wealth. Of the loveless marriage Brand was the child, while the rejected lover, forming an unconsecrated union with a gypsy, was the father of Gerd. Thus, psychologically, Gerd may be called Brand's sister, since, as the poem states,

'The first cause of all the brood
Was that he loved, and she withstood.'

Realizing his mother's greed and low ideals, Brand deems that his life must atone for her failings, and takes 'her debt upon him whole.'

'God's image, blotted in your soul,
In mine, will-cleansed, shall stand clear.'

When, however, he learns of Gerd's ancestry, he considers that his little son was a sacrificial lamb, slain for his mother's sin, since it was due to Gerd's taunts about his desertion of his fold, 'the parson flying off on falcon's back,' that led him to check his humane impulse to fly to the south with Agnes to save Alf's life.

'O expiation without end,
So wildly mingle, strangely blend
The threads that human fortune spin,
Sin tangled with the fruit of sin.'

And when he and Gerd die together, under an avalanche brought down by Gerd's rifle shot, it is because

'Blood of children must be spilt,
To atone the parent's guilt.'

Throughout the poem this close connection between Gerd and Brand is sustained, as though foreshadowing the denouement that the ends of absolute idealism and absolute lawlessness are the same. Both lead away from the paths trod by men: both, though for different reasons, deny the

ties of kin and friends, and both result in nothing. The Ice-church, where the 'gathered snow-drifts slope and soar,' the abode of stillness and frost, where the falcon does not enter, is the place of death, the negation of all things living. Gerd worships here, and to it Brand comes, when his own little valley-church, which had seemed so ugly and small to Gerd, has been torn down, and the new greater one he has built in its place appears to his now fanatical vision to be after all but an offering to the 'spirit of compromise,' since it was only a 'greater' church, not a church of life, an 'all' church.

The symbolism of the poem throughout is difficult, but it repays study, as containing the poet's deeper and true meaning. The use of symbolism in art is perhaps questionable, evincing either that the artist is not master of his medium, or that he works in a medium inadequate to his needs. It is a trait of the born romanticist, and therefore to find it in Ibsen is puzzling to those who consider him only a prose realist. In his prose dramas, however, as well as in his poetical works, Ibsen makes frequent use of it. This church-building symbol is used again in 'The Master Builder.' In 'The Lady from the Sea' we have the sea standing for freedom, and in 'Rosmersholm' white horses, the power of the past bearing down upon the present. It is as though words were too exact for the fluidity of his thoughts, and he must take refuge in suggestion.

Perhaps the most difficult symbol in 'Brand' is the falcon. C. H. Herford, in the notes to his incomparable translation of the poem, observes five things about it. (1) It is the enemy of Gerd, who persistently tries to kill it, and finally succeeds. (2) It will not enter the ice-church. (3) It is associated with the two moments at which Brand is about to abandon his rigid formula and yield to human affection. (4) It is identified with the 'tempter in the wilderness,' who assumes the form and pleads in the spirit of Agnes. (5) When slain by Gerd, it is found to be white as a dove.

In view of these conditions Herford identifies the falcon with the spirit of compromise, or 'humane' yielding, and speaks of it as allied to love. Why, however, may the falcon not be love itself? Examine this interpretation in the light of the observations. (1) Gerd, who stands for lawlessness, would indeed find it her enemy, since love is the fulfilling of the law. (2) Love, too, cannot dwell in the Ice-church, for its abiding place is among men. Love brings human relationship, indeed is the relationship itself. (3) When Brand feels the impulse to forsake his rigid formula, is he not touching the hem of love's garment? (4) Moreover, love permeates all the deeds of Agnes, is so much a part of herself, that when her spirit appears,

it must be as love. (5) The fifth statement, that when slain, the falcon is found to be 'white as a dove' further substantiates this view, for Brand in his discussion with Agnes in Act III over will and love, says that when will has conquered,

'Then comes at length the hour of love; —
Then it descends like a white dove,
Bearing the olive leaf, life.'

Therefore when the falcon falls, slain by Gerd's rifle shot, and is seen by her to be 'white as a dove,' the hour of love has come, as the concluding passages show. For when Brand, as the avalanche descends, cries in his anguish,

'Shall they wholly miss thy light
Who unto man's utmost might
Will'd —?'

a voice calls in the crashing thunder

'He is the God of Love.'

This is the ultimate word, and thus, though the poem may seem to be the apotheosis of will, its subtle pleading for love is unmistakable. Brand never comprehends love. He deems it a word under cover of which men hide their sins.

'Never did word so sorely prove
The smirch of lies, as this word love;
With devilish craft, where will is frail,
Men lay love over, as a veil,
And cunningly conceal thereby
That all their life is coquetry.'

He does not see that a pure spiritual state, such as he desires, can never be attained through *willing* alone, and even in his last hour, when he feels love's almost visible presence, he calls it the 'spirit of compromise.' The doctor, the one seemingly well-balanced character of the play, sees where he fails. He says to Brand:

'Yes, in your ledger, truly, Will
Has enough entries and to spare;
But, priest, your Love-account is still
A virgin chapter, blank and bare.'

Yet, when in the hour of the bitter realization that he has failed, even though were he to live his life over, his inner nature would compel him

to the same failure, Brand seems to feel that he has missed something from his life, and 'the path of yearning' opens before him.

'Jesus, I have cried and pleaded,—
From thy bosom still outcast :
Thou hast pass'd me by unheeded
As a well-worn word is pass'd.
Of Salvation's vesture stain'd
With the wine of tears unfeign'd,
Let me clasp one fold at last!'

The shadow of the falcon sweeps the land, and underneath the wings of Love, Brand the Titan, the stern, the unyielding, weeps, and kneels, and prays.

BEAUTY LOVERS

BY HANNAH PARKER KIMBALL

BEAUTY is Spirit married to a star,
In harmony supreme; by this star's rays
We live out long, translucent, tranquil days,
Such as no power of man may mend or mar.

THE TURQUOISE GOD

A MEXICAN LEGEND

BY ISABEL MOORE

THE Turquoise God was born white; but urged by the Sun whom all gods and men obey—he yielded to the power of secret flame and put on a beautiful azure; the colour of the ‘heart of heaven.’ Consequently Turquoise, even unto this day, is so in sympathy with the skies that it is always changing in shade: light blue when the heavens are clear, dull and sometimes green when the heavens are in a sullen mood. And, as sympathy with heaven is but the medium for the sympathy humane, so in turn does Turquoise guard its owner from evil by drawing upon itself any malignant influence: growing pale when there is danger, and in all things being so helpful that there has arisen a proverb among mankind which says, ‘A turquoise given by a loving hand carries with it happiness and good fortune.’

— But all this has come about in the long ages that have elapsed since in the Valley of White Turquoise in the land of the ancient Incas the Turquoise God that was born white obeyed the Sun and became blue.

Now the Temple of the Sun stood in the City of the Kings, Coricaucha which means the Place of Gold,—and certainly there was much gold in that place where, according to an old Chronicler, ‘every fountain, pathway and wall was regarded as a holy mystery.’

Among far-reaching fields of maize stood the Temple, builded of stone, simple and solid, as befitted the earthly dwelling of the deity who presided over the destinies of man; who gave light and warmth to the nations; whose breath was life to the vegetable world; who was the father of the royal dynasty; and the founder of the Empire of the Incas. And far beyond the plateau on which it stood, toward the distant, magic west of the world, stretched the crests of the frozen Andes.

Upon the chief altar of the Temple burned the sacred flame, cared for by the Virgins of the Sun. This was the holy of holies. At the west end of the Temple was emblazoned a representation of the face of the Sun God, glancing in all directions through innumerable shafts of golden rays; and so placed that the Sun himself, when rising and shining in at the eastern entrance, looked directly upon his prototype and lighted

the whole edifice with fresh young glory. And, opening from the great chamber with its frieze of heavy gold, were various chapels sacred to the other ruling deities: the silver-faced Moon Goddess, mother of the Incas, the sparkling stars, the iridescent Rainbow, and the mighty Gods of Thunder and Lightning.

These were the greater gods. And near them, like satellites, were the lesser gods, of whom the Turquoise God was one. But though he was a lesser god, he was a very ancient god in that land, and with Crystal and Coral had embellished the sanctuary of the dread deity, Pachacamac, the Creator of the World, he whom the Incas had found among their predecessors in the land and who was yet older than their Sun God.

It was during the Feast of Raymi, of the summer solstice, when the Sun God returned to his people from the South, that the White Men came. There had long been predictions of this coming of a white and gleaming people, new Children of the Sun. The oracles had said that the race of the Incas should become extinct with the twelfth Inca, who was now upon the throne. There was strife between the royal brothers. Comets had been seen in the heavens. Earthquakes had shaken the land. The Moon had been en-ringed with fire of many colours. A thunderbolt had fallen upon one of the royal palaces and burned it to ashes. An eagle, chased by hawks, screaming in the air, had been seen to hover above the great Square of Cuzco; and when, pierced by the talons of his tormentors, the king of birds had fallen lifeless in the presence of many of the Inca nobles, the wise men read in the event an augury of their own destruction.

Pilgrims were assembled, prostrate and breathless, for the first rays of the Sun God to strike his golden likeness in the Temple, at the time of the Feast of Raymi. Conch and trumpet and atabal brought forth barbaric melodies. The royal mummies, with their robes profusely ornamented, were seated in gold-embossed chairs, to welcome the Sun God.

Then came the White Men from the North, Pizarro and his followers, in the name of the Holy Vicar of God and the Sovereign of Spain.

Like thunder clouds, dense masses of warriors closed down upon the slopes and summits of the mountains. There advanced a forest of crests and waving banners; of lances and battleaxes edged with gleaming copper. The ground shook with the tread of heavy cavalry. A trumpet sounded a prolonged note, and the Spaniards descended upon the beautiful and sacred city as it lay lapped in its verdant valley. They went directly to the square in front of the great Temple. They proclaimed

that the dynasty had fallen; the sceptre forever passed from among the Incas.

Before this race of dazzling strangers, dropped from the clouds, the people fled. And it was not many days before flame enveloped the city of Coricaucha. Towers and huts and halls and palaces went down before it. Graves were rifled of their buried jewels; human beings were tortured to extort hidden treasure; the royal mummies were stripped of their ornaments. The ancient seat of empire was laid in ashes,—all but the temple that stood ever forth against the flame—while the shadowy Andes looked down upon all.

So did the Spaniards to their brethren who became ‘a flock without a fold.’ And on the Temple of the Sun they raised the Cross of Christ.

The old Gods fled. Only the Sun God, who in his manifold greatness could not desert his people, visited again that land.

Along the narrow streets and by the banks of the crystal river that flowed through the city, hastened the Turquoise God: on through the straggling borders of houses along the outer edge of the city, on and again on among the rocks and waterfalls and woods, as though the Spaniards were close behind. Indeed they did hunt for him after their appetite for gold had been somewhat appeased. But he eluded pursuit and by that time had got far beyond their reach, passing the length of the Empire, a hundred leagues, north by the great highway of Cuzco. Along the Cordillera of the Andes from South America and the Isthmus, he entered into the land of the mighty Aztecs and the kingdom of Anahuac, where the War God, Mexitli, had builded his city at the direction of the Eagle. And there he found a state of affairs curiously like that in the land of the Incas. Destruction and pillage by the omnipresent White Men were raging; the temples were in ruin; the Older Gods had fled.

In that land the Turquoise God received the name of Chalchihuitl, while he dwelt for a little space upon Turquoise Mountain; and, later on, he hid in a cave where years and years afterwards were the famous turquoise mines of the Cerillos.

But nowhere could he find a safe retreat. So on he fled, northward, ever keeping near the ridge of the Great Divide, and passing the whole length of the *tierra caliente*: and yet again beyond the vast table-lands where the hills stretch away and ever onward to the north. And on all the country round about over which he wandered, the Turquoise God left azure footprints.

In the land of his final exile, among the *mesas* in the land of the Zunis, he at last found refuge, and a companion.

The Goddess of Salt had for a very long time been greatly troubled by the people near her domain on the sea-shore who took away her snowy treasures without offering any sacrifice in return; and so she forsook the ocean and went to live in the mountains. But the people of New Mexico followed after her; and she, wearied to death of them, declared she would pass from their view forever, and penetrated further and further inland. Whenever she stopped beside a pool to rest she turned it salty; and she wandered so long about the great basins of the West that much of the water in them is very bitter.

Then it was that she and the Turquoise God met, and travelled on together, hand-in-hand. Each had the same need of companionship. Each had lost all of this world except themselves. Therefore they loved each other very happily.

Presently they came to a wonderful *mesa*, guarded by a high wall of sandstone. This they broke through, making a great arched portal. But the Goddess of Salt hit her head against the portal when passing under it and broke off one of her beautiful plumes so that it fell outside. And there it lies unto this day.

And within that magic *Mesa*, hidden in the *mirage* of the desert, they rested side by side forever. Their foot prints can still be seen there—the snowy salt and the outcrops of azure turquoise nuggets.

SAN FRANCISCO UNDER STRESS

BY HARRY COWELL

IN a house set by his own hands on the rocks of a hill overlooking life and the once fair city of St. Francis, today so desolate, there has dwelt these many years, and still dwells, with God for next-door neighbor, a humble worker in words, whom now an incurable love of the impossible constrains to dip his pen in the gloom of earthquake and the glow of fire, to the end of drawing, rough-sketchwise, from his particular point of view, the twofold disaster that of late has befallen California.

To the vast majority of San Franciscans, awaking that dread morning in sudden alarm from dreamless sleep, it seemed that the dawn was come of the last day, and the earth in the throes of dissolution. Space was passing into nothingness. Time had already ceased to be. For forty-odd seconds there was eternity.

Then matter righted itself, and, after a fashion, mind; and the old order of things was in a measure re-established. But even at noon, six hours and more after the great trembler, men, with the awe of the unknowable still heavy upon them, gazed first at the ominous blood-red sun and then at one another — in silence, yet, as who should say, The end of all things is at hand!

Reason had been hurled from her throne, and lay stunned. During the interregnum, Fancy, with doting Superstition for prime minister, held sway; and, as if the graves had gaped and given up their dead, the air was felt to be peopled with dim beings hurrying to and fro in confusion or huddling together in affright. From the north and from the south, from the east and from the west they seemed to come, to foregather into a vast concourse, and suddenly to disperse — the departed, just as the imagination had often pictured them in the Valley of Jehoshaphat on the day of judgment.

With not a few of the braver of those still living, although the spirit was undismayed, the flesh none the less feared for itself; and one rose up at the voice of a bird, and at the footfall of Love upon the stairs fled in panic fear. Masks were shaken off, disguises dropped, and human nature went naked about the ruined streets, discovering both unexpected beauty and ugliness beyond belief. Much that is hidden was revealed and many

a secret thing made known. Each man was himself — a man, no more, no less. The hereafter was forestalled.

As for the philosopher, used to the contemplation of infinities and mysteries (which, though usually lying below the surface of things, are at no time far to seek), he, too, was not a little overawed to find himself in a world all wonder, living amidst realities weird as the dreams of opium-eaters, monstrous as the imaginings of the insane.

All day long it seemed to many as if a great and solemn drama were being enacted, which the soul watched as a mere spectator, disinterested, aloof, yet not without deep concern for the body as the hero of the piece beset by unheard-of dangers, a drama full of terror, of sudden partings, and suspense more insupportable than saddest farewell. Stranger things and more incongruous than ever sleep witnessed occasioned no surprise in the beholder. Chaos long deposed was once more king. And ever and anon appeared Rumor, breathless, whispering catastrophe with bloodless lips. The incredible found ready credence. Nothing was too improbable for Consternation to believe. Even Serenity itself, realizing the utter indifference of Nature to the fate of man, stood appalled. A fear of the earth more awesome than any fear of the sea was fallen upon men. Babies coming upon the scene opened their eyes in dismay, closed them, wailed, shuddered, and withdrew forever.

The sun, still blood-red, set in a black sea, leaving behind it unutterable gloom and ineffable grandeur, and a prodigious night fell as upon a world for which there was no morning. At once, men forgot the earthquake and with one accord yielded themselves to the inexplicable fascination of fire. In the luminous clouds of smoke ever forming and reforming began forthwith to appear and disappear majestic figures clothed in resplendent purple and gold; and palaces of unearthly pomp, fit dwelling-places for the princes of the powers of the air; and the forms of fleeing women, with a splendor of flowing garments and a glory of loosened hair wind-blown behind them; and finally, when the flames reached their temples, the faces, if such they may be called, of the incredible deities of the Orient — gorgeous grotesques, now refined, transfigured, wooden images on their way, as it were, to immaterial, immeasurable divinity. The heavens to the zenith were hung, so to say, with numberless canvases, vast and beautiful and vague, issuing incessantly from the brain of some great mad painter; canvases full of fantastic shapes and quaintest imagery, in colors curiously blent. From time to time, however, the dream of him who saw the conflagration as a sublime unreality was broken by a thunderous detonation of dynamite, very

real, which passed high overhead, going seaward, and with innumerable reverberations faded away into infinite silence.

The dawn came, not as a relief, but as a disappointment; bringing with it, in the gritting of ashes between the teeth and the sting of lime in the eye, all the wonted matter-of-factness of morning. Heaven and hell were as far away as ever; the half-opened book of doom was again closed, and judgment indefinitely deferred. To men who had made them ready for death — nay, for translation — life was an impertinence.

At noon the sun looked down on a cityful of stoics — that is to say, persons incapable of further feeling. The second night, men slept. Long before the fire ceased to rage, the imagination had burned out.

Already the ruins of San Francisco are æons old. The stranger within our gates now weeps over them tears as poetic and idle and painless as those that the Parthenon calls forth. But we,— we weep not.

REALISM IN AMERICAN FICTION OF TO-DAY

BY IRVING WILSON VOORHEES

THE word realism as applied to literature carries with it to unliterary minds something either startlingly tragic or hopelessly sentimental. It represents to them in no uncertain manner what is so graphically described as blood and thunder in letters or as a later paragrapher puts it 'thud and blunder.' It implies also a distinct class — made up of two great subclasses, writers and readers — which is conveniently spoken of as the 'realistic school.' By reason of its sometimes too radical methods or gross violations of commonly accepted standards of taste, realism has provoked for itself disparaging, even sarcastic and bitter criticism. The grounds for such criticism have been perfectly well established and are not the result of narrowness or illiberalism.

In its proper sense realism has its essence in the depicting of persons and scenes as they exist to the mind of the writer, with no attempt on his part to modify them according to any ideal standard. Realism must therefore be based primarily on facts — facts known intimately to the writer as a part of his actual experience, and enhanced in value by the minuteness of his observation. Hence when skilfully treated realistic literature is likely to survive because it deals intimately with life; and also because it dwells in the mind of the reader in consequence of its vivid impression upon his consciousness, demanding as it does his most rapt attention.

Realism in its own time has seldom or never been popular. In proof of this we need only go to the literature of France so rich in the vivid and picturesque. Balzac, Dumas, and Maupassant — to mention the chief apostles of words in action as well as of the action in words — were little more than respected and little less than tolerated in their own day. But 'in the process of the suns' they came to be known first to scholars and critics, and then to the general public until their fame was world-wide. But one may say of American realism that whether it be popular or not it is an outgrowth of the 'problems' peculiar to America — the race problem, the labor problem, the social problem, to mention representative questions of current interest — occasioned by the struggle for existence of new life on

new soil. Transitional or temporary social conditions often have found their truest expression and have struck their most far-reaching notes when descriptive of the individual considered alone or of his class considered collectively. Realism is therefore quite applicable in a country like ours so full of immigrants seeking new homes, and in the development of new territory consequent upon the distribution of an heterogeneous and industrious population.

The inquisitiveness and scientific spirit of our age has also done much for the propagation of a literature dealing with the hitherto unknown, and hence full of living interest in all that affects human welfare. Discoveries in science are always of interest to the intellectual public and if such discoveries be of practical utility not only are they of interest to the intellectual but become matters of common discussion in news columns and on the editorial page. Hence the peculiarly American fondness for the newspaper fosters realism in letters because the newspaper is concerned with what is happening now or may happen in the near future. Macaulay's dictum that as civilization advances poetry declines might be translated to-day by the substitution of the word 'idealism' for 'poetry'; since poetry is essentially typical of the idealistic. The decline of noteworthy poetry in our day is a commonplace whether the cause lay in the fact that we are incapable of producing good poems of any length with sustained effect, or whether such production is hindered by the fact that 'nobody reads poetry.'

The flood of recent American fiction, most of which is distinctly of the realistic type, has undoubtedly produced a great deal of careless work and consequently has given rise to the often just appellation 'ephemeral.' It is obviously, however, all too early to determine what of it shall live and what shall pass away. However, one instance serves us well — the American historical novel so woefully overwrought has become little more than a memory and hence its place has been usurped by stories of present-day life based on facts more in accord with current popular interest. We now have the political novel dealing with the thoughts, methods and results of politicians of high or low estate as the 'Senator North' of Mrs. Atherton, 'The Honorable Peter Sterling' of Ford and 'The Gentleman from Indiana' of Tarkington. Or the social novel dealing directly with life among both the masses and classes as 'The Bread-winners,' whose authorship is still in dispute, 'The Red Badge of Courage' of Crane, 'The Luck of Roaring Camp' and 'Outcasts of Poker Flat' of Harte, the 'East' and the 'West' of Wyckoff, and the various descriptions of life among working girls by the Van Vorsts. There is also the novel of single and often singular character,

such as Bacheller's 'Eben Holden,' Brook's 'Morgan Bates,' Burnett's 'Lass o' Lowries' and Eggleston's 'Faith Doctor.' Howell's 'A Modern Instance,' and Cable's 'Grandissimes' are representative of realism in American fiction; while more recent work of merit is found in 'The Call of the Wild' and 'Sea-Wolf' of London, and 'The Blazed Trail' of Stewart Edward White.

In its most exemplary form realism calls for rugged description, but the difficulty of combining rugged description with careful diction and the restraint so indispensable to good taste is known only to those who have tried to write stories of this type. Even in the best and purest realism, refined taste is often chagrined, and sensitive natures are pricked by too much ruggedness and too little of the sense of proportion. It is perhaps this lack of conformity which gave Mr. Stedman the reason for saying that 'Realism constantly is used to cloak the mediocrity of artists whose designs are stiff, barren and grotesque, — 'the form without the soul.' Yet one may affirm that such a cloak can never cover a multitude of literary sins and that the successful appeal of the artist who essays the form without the soul is short-lived and altogether inadequate.

But realism when standing bare and alone is never at its best. It must be leavened with enough of the ideal to make its structure homogeneous and thus to save it from the freak order in literary biology. It must tell its own story and not be burdened with direct or implied moral deductions. And moreover it must be possessed of a subtle psychology that explains without seeming to explain the causes that actuate men to lead noble lives or to perform noble deeds. Upon these essentials realism in American fiction must depend for its future well-being.

WHITMAN'S READING OF LIFE

BY GEORGE J. SMITH

GEORGE MEREDITH, for one group of his somewhat inscrutable poems, hit upon the title 'A Reading of Earth.' The phrase seems to me rather happily suggestive of the business of the poet, indeed the function and nature of all art. It is to give a reading of life, the artist's defined impression, a view of the world through the more or less transparent medium of a soul. When Matthew Arnold called poetry a 'criticism of life' he did not, I think, find the best word. The poet is not so much a critic as a translator, a sympathetic interpreter of life, a reader of life. Walt Whitman plainly recognized this as the poet's function—

'He bestows on every object or quality its fit proportion, neither more nor less,

He is no arguer, he is judgment,

He judges not as the judge judges but as the sun falling round a helpless thing.'

The maker of poems is the 'Answerer;' he looks upon life, responds to it, reveals it. And with what freshness and curiosity of gaze does Whitman front life:

'This then is life,

Here is what has come to the surface after so many throes and convulsions.

How curious! how real!

Underfoot the divine soil, overhead the sun.'

Now the great question concerning any poet is, what did he make out about this confronted 'life?' How did he 'read' it? Did he pronounce the world 'all very good,' as spake the Lord of the Book of Genesis, or was he a Schopenhauer whose world, like Hamlet's, was 'out of joint?' Was he a stoic and apologist like Arnold; or a visionary reformer with soul on fire, like Shelley; a comfortable surface-philosopher like Pope, with his 'whatever is, is right;' or a winning but unbelieving hedonist like Omar Khayyam? —

'Come, fill the Cup, and in the fire of Spring
Your Winter-garment of Repentance fling :
The Bird of Time has but a little way
To flutter — and the Bird is on the Wing.'

Though Whitman has something in common with most of these poets, he has a distinctive point of view of his own. To understand it we must look for his answer to that fundamental question: What sort of world is it we have got into? Let the answer be sought in Whitman himself, in a spirit of frank inquiry, with no intrusion of our own opinions or preconceptions. For myself, I hold in this paper no brief for or against Whitman's view of any aspect of life. I disclaim any purpose but that of presenting, as far as possible in his own language, what I understand him to hold for truth.

First considering the visible world, the world of objects, let us question Whitman as the poet of nature. To him the natural world is not 'out of joint,' it is not a chance assemblage of atoms, a product of blind and capricious forces, it is not a practical joke or God's plaything. He never could have written the lines of the old Persian poet:

'We are no other than a moving row
Of Magic Shadow-shapes that come and go . . .
But helpless Pieces of the Game He plays
Upon this Chequer-board of Nights and Days;
Hither and thither moves, and checks, and slays,
And one by one back in the Closet lays.'

The nearest Whitman comes to this sort of self-contempt and infidelity is in the lines 'As I Ebb'd with the Ocean of Life,' one of his few poems of sadness:

'As the ocean so mysterious rolls toward me closer and closer,
I too but signify at the utmost a little wash'd-up drift,
A few sands and dead leaves to gather,
Gather, and merge myself as part of the sands and drift.'

Far other is his usual mood. The world as he sees it is an orderly world, working itself out under a magnificent rule of law, it is a manifestation of supernal plan:

'The bright suns I see and the dark suns I cannot see are in their place,

The palpable is in its place and the impalpable is in its place.'

Everything is fully caused, the present is the child of the past — its complete inevitable outgrowth and successor. Whitman, in short, sees the

world in a modern way, with the eyes of the evolutionist and the philosophic historian.

But it is not only a world of order and intention, it is a beautiful world, a delightful world, a wonderful, adorable world, that satisfies man's body and his soul. One of the most convincing of pastoral poems is his 'Give me the Splendid Silent Sun.' His 'Song at Sunset' is a hymn of adoration. In one extraordinary poem ('This Compost') he actually sings the common soil of the earth, as poets of old have sung war and romance. He is in love with the earth and the sea.

'Smile, O voluptuous cool-breath'd earth !

Earth of departed sunset — earth of the mountains misty-topt,

Earth of shine and dark mottling the tide of the river !

Far-swooping elbow'd earth — rich apple-blossom'd earth !

Smile, for your lover comes. '

Nor is it only in the large that the things of earth are good and wondrous. His pages are full of the 'amazement of things — even the least particle !' 'A mouse is miracle enough to stagger sextillions of infidels.' As for him he knows of nothing else but miracles :

'To me every hour of the light and dark is a miracle,

Every cubic inch of space is a miracle,

Every square yard of the surface of the earth is spread with the same,

Every foot of the interior swarms with the same. '

Of course this delighted amazement at the visible world is essentially a religious feeling, and indeed Walt Whitman, though a rejecter of conventional religion, is beyond question a singer of the religion of nature.

'I say no man has ever yet been half devout enough,

None has ever yet adored or worship'd half enough. '

'Know you, solely to drop in the earth the germs of a greater religion,

The following chants each for its kind I sing. '

'In the faces of men and women I see God, and in my own face in the glass,

I find letters from God dropt in the street, and every one is sign'd by God's name,

And I leave them where they are, for I know that wheresoe'er I go,

Others will punctually come for ever and ever. '

'Give me, O God, to sing that thought,

Give me, give him or her I love this quenchless faith,
 Belief in plan of Thee enclosed in Time and Space,
 Health, peace, salvation universal.'

Perhaps a natural question arises, does not Whitman detect in this beautiful and wondrous array of appearances, the bloodshed, the fear, the cruel struggle for existence that goes on in the natural world? Yes, he now and then admits there is this dark and terrible side; he says in his 'Song of the Rolling Earth,' 'Defects and excrescences show just as much as perfections show.' Later I shall have occasion to quote some of his enumeration of such 'defects and excrescences.' But after all his temperament is triumphantly optimistic. He simply cannot dwell upon the painful side of nature; he swings back into his accustomed orbit of praise and glorification:

'Open mouth of my soul uttering gladness,
 Eyes of my soul seeing perfection,
 Natural life of me faithfully praising things, . . .
 For I do not see one imperfection in the universe,
 And I do not see one cause or result lamentable at last in the universe.'

Of a piece with Whitman's science-inspired wonder at the world is his reverence for the human body (surely not the least of 'miracles') — his frank delight in the body, and his persistent celebration of the bodily functions, particularly of sex. Here we came upon those passages in his book that horrified a Washington official and a Massachusetts censor of the press, were disapproved of by the uncarnal Emerson, and no doubt chiefly distinguish Whitman to this day in the minds of thousands who know him but slightly, whether from little reading of his poems or from limitation in their own souls. In his 'Children of Adam' poems Whitman courageously 'sings the body electric.' He 'believes in the flesh and the appetites.' Procreation is an incomprehensible marvel, it is a vastly important element in life, and he refuses to exclude it and what pertains to it from his 'reading of life.' He purposes to clarify men's thoughts. He treats the subject seriously, not sentimentally. I have always been at a loss to see how any comprehending reader could find in these poems anything prurient or vulgar. Their point of view is impersonal, almost physiological. Whether they are poems, whether they justify themselves as Whitman meant them to, whether they have done more good than harm, are questions I have no intention to enter upon. Whatever spiritual element may be in them is for most readers less prominent than their sen-

sational side. But when all is said, as Whitman views life sex is an integral part of it; he will not deny it, or ignore it, or veil it, or hint at it, or apologize for it. For to him,

‘ If anything is sacred, the human body is sacred. ’

So far I have tried to explain what Whitman thought of the visible world, I have dealt with him as a poet of nature. Now let us consider his reading of the unseen world, go to him as the poet of man. For man, the real man, is of the unseen world. The body of a man, however wonderful and however closely related to the soul, is not the soul. No one sees this more clearly than Whitman, notwithstanding his occasional assertions of their identity. The fact that he sings of the body and that he rejoices in the visible world, has led many to think him a materialist and a sensualist. Nothing could be further from the truth. To him all is spiritual. The soul of man and how the world sustains it is his chief theme. He knows the soul is supreme, that the visible but ministers to the invisible :

‘ I will confront these shows of the day and night,

I will know if I am to be less than they. . .

I match my spirit against yours, you orbs, growths, mountains,
brutes,

Copious as you are I absorb you all in myself, and become the
master myself. ’

‘ Whoever you are ! claim your own at any hazard !

These shows of the East and West are tame compared to you,

These immense meadows, these interminable rivers, you are im-
mense and interminable as they,

Master or mistress in your own right over nature, elements, pain,
passion, dissolution. ’

‘ I know I have the best of time and space, and was never meas-
ured and never will be measured. ’

Thus the first great truth that Whitman sees in the metaphysical world is Individuality. So powerfully and directly does he proclaim the greatness of personality that to many shallow readers his egotism seems colossal.

‘ I know I am solid and sound,

To me the converging objects of the universe perpetually flow,

All are written to me, and I must get what the writing means.

I know I am august,

I do not trouble my spirit to vindicate itself or be understood,

(I reckon I behave no prouder than the level I plant my house
by, after all.) ’

Of course in reading such lines it is obvious that Whitman's pronoun I stands for the typical man, any man.

'Whoever you are! you are he or she for whom the earth is solid and liquid,

You are he or she for whom the sun and moon hang in the sky.'

A foremost element in his conception of the cosmos called man is an assured faith in immortality. Personal survival of death and personal existence through limitless ages of development is with him not a dogma or a theory, but an unquestioned truth, a necessity. It underlies all his other notions about man and explains them. If you cannot accept immortality as a fact, you must continually be making allowances when you read what Whitman writes.

'I know I am deathless,

I know this orbit of mine cannot be swept by a carpenter's compass,

I know I shall not pass like a child's carlacue cut with a burnt stick at night.'

'Is it wonderful that I should be immortal? as every one is immortal;

I know it is wonderful, but my eyesight is equally wonderful.'

'Nations ten thousand years before these States, and many times ten thousand years before these States,

Garner'd clusters of ages that men and women like us grew up and travel'd their course and pass'd on . . .


Are those billions of men really gone?

Are those women of the old experience of the earth gone? . . .

I believe of all those men and women that filled the unnamed lands, every one exists this hour here or elsewhere, invisible to us.'

One of the first consequences of this unhesitating assertion of immortality is Whitman's notion of equality. There is reason to think that many persons have an erroneous notion as to Whitman's doctrine of equality. To be sure, he contradicts himself, apparently. Now he seems to assert equality without restriction, everyone is as good or as bad as any other, and (what it is more unusual to say) all, however coarse, ignorant, or degraded, are as much men to be respected, says Whitman, as himself or any other.

' You felons on trial in courts,
You convicts in prison cells, you sentenced assassins chain'd and
handcuff'd with iron,

Who am I too that I am not on trial or in prison? ' 

But it is evident elsewhere that he understands by equality not that any
and every man is today as good, as able, as highly developed, as any other
man, but that all have infinite possibilities in them, and that all should
have an equal chance for self-realization.

' Of equality (he says) — as if it harm'd me, giving others the
same chances and rights as myself. '

Or again :

' I speak the pass-word primeval, I give the sign of democracy,
By God ! I will accept nothing which all cannot have their coun-
terpart of on the same terms. '

But what are these same terms? Does Whitman believe that all can com-
ply here and now with the terms? Does he believe men are here and now
actually equal? Does he deny excellences, superiorities among men?
Not at all. The equality he asserts is not an actual but a potential equality,
an equality that requires ages on ages to develop it, to prove it. It is an
equality that grows out of limitless immortality. In remote future ages,
somewhere, the present physical, intellectual, moral differences among
men shall have disappeared or have been reduced to a trifle.

' You haggard, uncouth, untutored Bedowee !

You plague-swarms in Madras, Nankin, Kaubul, Cairo !

You benighted roamer of Amazonia ! you Patagonian ! you
Feejee-man !

I do not prefer others so very much before you either,

I do not say one word against you, away back there where you
stand

(You will come forward in due time to my side.) '

' I saw the face of the most smear'd and slobbering idiot they
had at the asylum,

And I knew for my consolation what they knew not,

I knew of the agents that emptied and broke my brother,

The same wait to clear the rubbish from the fallen tenement,

And I shall look again in a score or two of ages,

And I shall meet the real landlord perfect and unharm'd, every
inch as good as myself. '

Equality in ' a score or two of ages ' would seem rather far removed from

actual equality today; the latter in fact is not asserted by Whitman, nor can anyone in his senses assert it. With Whitman equality hinges on immortality. Whatever hinders any soul's progress toward the true stature of man he would remove; meanwhile, the hindered one, however inferior today, is still a man and among his fellows.

Closely related to Whitman's high claims for every man is his glorification of the average. There is no doubt that his sympathies and affiliations were in a special degree with the common citizen, the undistinguished many, those who toil with their hands. He loved them, he would be their poet. He had faith in them, faith that is more inspiring than praise. He saw in the great 'divine average' the strength and glory of America.

'I was looking a long while for Intentions,

For a clew to the history of the past for myself, and for these
chants — and now I have found it, . . .

It is the life of one man or woman today — the average man of
today.'

Along with this he naturally declares for the man of good physique :

'Myself and mine gymnastic ever,

To stand the cold or heat, to take good aim with a gun, to sail
a boat, to manage horses, to beget superb children,

To speak readily and clearly, to feel at home among common
people,

And to hold our own in terrible positions on land or sea.'

From this hearty admiration of the rank and file, he passes to include in his accepting and comprehending heart the weak, the deformed, the insane, the sinful, the criminal, the outcast. 'Not till the sun excludes you do I exclude you.' This breadth, charity, all-embracing love is indeed one of the noblest of Whitman's traits. For the wrong-doer, the base, the morally hideous, as for the physically deformed or diseased, Whitman has pity and warm sympathy, not blame. For whatever is, is fully caused, and whatever is amiss will in due time be fully set right.

It sometimes appears that Whitman in his determination to love and cherish the poorest and the meanest, spreads the mantle of his sympathy so far to that side that he leaves uncovered the ultra respectable part of society. There is here perhaps a limitation to his inclusiveness, though one not hard to understand. He seems at times to indulge a prejudice, a positive dislike, against refinement, finish, cultivation. The people riding in carriages in Central Park were apt to excite his contempt and criticism.

‘Of person arrived at high positions, ceremonies, wealth, scholarships, and the like’ . . .

Often to me those men and women pass unwittingly the true realities of life, and go toward false realities,

And often to me they are sad, hasty, unwaked somnambules walking the dusk.’

The truth in what he says here is plain enough — the so-called elite are not always the real elect; but the incautious reader who pieces together Whitman’s justification of the degraded and the criminal and his seeming condemnation of the respectable or the well-to-do (what a curious resemblance here, by the way, to the attitude of Jesus !) is prone to conclude that Whitman denies all excellences in some men as contrasted with others. So I wish to touch again now upon this point, as I deem it essential to the correct understanding of Whitman. I assert that he clearly and repeatedly recognizes the real superiorities among men. Of course it is not wealth or position or mere brain culture that makes true superiority. He emphasizes other things. On the one hand he says : ‘The wonder is always and always how there can be a mean man or an infidel.’ On the other hand he utters the profound aphorism : ‘Charity and personal force are the only investments worth anything.’ ‘To a pupil’ he says,

‘Is reform needed? is it through you?’

The greater the reform needed, the greater the Personality you need to accomplish it.’

His rallying cry on the Open Road is,

‘Allons ! after the great Companions, and to belong to them !

They too are on the road — they are the swift and majestic men — they are the greatest women.’

Or again, ‘A great city is that which has the greatest men and women.’ What does Whitman definitely mean by this word ‘greatest?’ What makes a great personality, the capacity for leadership? Physical perfections, as might be expected, first of all :

‘Now I see the secret of the making of the best persons,

It is to grow in the open air and to eat and sleep with the earth.’

But here as elsewhere Whitman is not content with the physical alone. He finely sketches the Ideal Man in these few words :

‘Fair, able, beautiful, content, and loving,

Complete in body, and dilate in spirit.’

Whitman knows well enough that the ‘average’ man falls far short of this high ideal. For here are in combination bodily perfection and beauty,

intellectual power, the noblest moral qualities, and greatness of spirit. But Whitman's championship of the average man is not inconsistent with the recognition of these noble superiorities; for every man has in him the germ and capability of these highest developments, only give him opportunity and time enough.

From this study of Whitman's conception of Individuality, let us pass to consider the view he takes of the relations of individuals in society.

First of all, as everyone knows, he is distinctively the poet of Democracy.

'One's self I sing, a simple separate person,

Yet utter the word Democratic, the word En-Masse.'

Nor is his democracy a vague sentiment. His native bias was no doubt for an untrammelled, yes, even for a loose life. I could easily quote passages in illustration of this, and perhaps I ought to do so in order not to seem to be 'respectable-izing' Whitman by avoiding his utterances of the sentiments of the primitive and easy-going man. But these utterances are familiar to all readers of Whitman, and though they represent one strongly developed side of his nature, they do not represent his best-matured and more enduring because most thoughtful side. Though he may in some passages admire those who 'think lightly of the laws,' yet through all his life Whitman believed in the nation, in law:

'All thine, O sacred Union!

City and State, North, South, item and aggregate,

We dedicate, dread Mother, all to thee!

Protectress absolute thou! bulwark of all!

Without thee neither all nor each, nor land, home,

Nor ship, nor mine, nor any here this day secure,

Nor aught, nor any day secure . . .

Our freedom all in thee! our very lives in thee!'

Many a poem of Whitman's is inspired by the ideal of nationality represented by 'these States,' by the vision of America's final achievement of her glorious mission among the nations of the earth. Whether if living today he could have proclaimed so confidently the triumph of the American idea it might be interesting to question.

But what of the free relations of men inside this protecting husk of nationality? True democracy, answers Whitman, is possible only where men are comrades and lovers. A whole division of *Leaves of Grass* celebrates 'the institution of the dear love of comrades,' and includes some of Whitman's most beautiful and touching poems. But it is at least noteworthy in this connection that Whitman, for all his acceptance of women

as the complete equals of men, and for all his celebration of sex, never wrote a true poem of love. And that for the simple reason that he does not seem to have known what love in its highest reaches is. Physical passion, of course, he comprehended, and the hearty comradeship of men and women he thought he knew, but these two phases of the relations of men and women seem for him to have included all. Women, like men were comrades, with a difference. Of romantic love, the transformer, the subtle magician, he seems to have comprehended little. There is no evidence, so far as I know, that he ever had any direct acquaintance with the sort of enduring and inspiring passion that Tennyson described and Browning experienced and Shakespeare immortalized.

One question remains as to Whitman's idea of human relations, and that is as to conduct, morality. Among those who talk about Whitman and praise him, the notion crops up again and again that Whitman denied that anything is evil, or that at least he justified what men call wrongdoing. I have heard this element of Whitman's teaching asserted and regretted by his sincere admirers. Now it is of course true that Whitman was by native tendency a rebel against convention. In respect of religion, in manners, in dress, in mode of life, and in the form of his verse, he shows his radical tendencies. These things are what we encounter on first reading him. His life was a reaction against Puritanism, against regularity, propriety, narrowness. The very key to his point of view seems his love of freedom, his idiosyncrasy, his doctrine that a man must be himself at all hazards. Hence the impression of largeness, rebelliousness, egotism, that he makes. But while all this describes his temperament and the tendency of some of his more striking outward peculiarities, when we come to examine into his serious theory of life it at once becomes evident that he is no mere denier or iconoclast. At heart he is positive and constructive. Is the charge true that he confounds good and evil? He is far from doing so; he plainly recognizes evil as evil. Let us hear him for himself:

‘I sit and look out upon all the sorrows of the world, and upon
all oppression and shame,
I see in low life the mother misused by her children, dying,
neglected, gaunt, desperate,
I see the wife misused by her husband, I see the treacherous
seducer of young women,
I mark the ranklings of jealousy and unrequited love attempted
to be hid, I see these sights on the earth,
I see the workings of battle, pestilence, tyranny, I see martyrs
and prisoners,

I observe the slights and degradations cast by arrogant persons
upon laborers, the poor, and upon negroes, and the like;
All these — all the meanness and agony without end I sitting
look out upon,

See, hear, and am silent. '

In another place he insists that in the 'Rounded Catalogue Divine Complete' be included such parts of life as these:

'The devilish and the dark, the dying and diseases'd,
The countless (nineteen-twentieths) low and evil, crude and
savage,
The crazed, prisoners in jail, the horrible, rank, malignant,
Venom and filth, serpents, the ravenous sharks, liars, the dissolute, . . .

The barren soil, the evil men, the slag and hideous rot. '

Clearly, Whitman sees and knows the evil well enough for what it is; only, it does not overwhelm him. In the first place, it can historically be accounted for; it is inevitable, perhaps necessary.

'I assert that all past days were what they must have been,
And that they could nohow have been better than they were,
And that today is what it must be, and that America is,
And that today and America could nohow be better than they
are. '

Is it not a shallow intelligence that could take Whitman to mean by this that whatever is, is perfect, and that all things are equally good? He admits that evil is evil, but it is fully caused and is in its place. Yet note that that place is far below and to the rear, and that evil has a long way to travel:

'The universe is duly in order, everything is in its place,
What has arrived is in its place and what waits shall be in its
place,
The twisted skull waits, the watery or rotten blood waits,
The child of the glutton or venerealee waits long, and the child
of the drunkard waits long, and the drunkard himself waits
long. '

Evil is in the world, and it is evil, it is the obstacle to human progress, but it shall not endure, shall not triumph.

'Roaming in thought over the Universe I saw the little that is
Good steadily hastening toward immortality,
And the vast all that is call'd Evil I saw hastening to merge itself
and become lost and dead. '

Or again :

‘Out of the bulk, the morbid and shallow,
Out of the bad majority, the varied countless frauds of men and
states,
Electric, antiseptic yet, cleaving, suffusing all,
Only the good is universal.’
‘Ah poverties, wincings, and sulky retreats,
Ah you foes that in conflict have overcome me,
(For what is my life or any man’s life but a conflict with foes,
the old, the incessant war?)
You degradations, you tussle with passions and appetites, . . .
Ah think not you finally triumph, my real self has yet to come
forth, . . .

It shall yet stand up the soldier of ultimate victory.’

This brings me to the last point in Whitman’s reading of life to which I wish to call attention. It is his recognition of life as a struggle, but above all as a progress. Life is to him no primrose path of dalliance.

‘Now understand me well (he says) — it is provided in the essence of things that from any fruition of success, no matter what, shall come forth something to make a greater struggle necessary.’

And in a little poem entitled ‘Life’ he says :

‘Ever the undiscouraged, resolute, struggling soul of man, . . .
Ever the soul dissatisfied, curious, unconvinced at last,
Struggling today the same, battling the same.’

And what is the aim of this perpetual strife and endeavor? It is to improve, to reach through aspiration higher levels of life and truer experiences of happiness, to attain the estate of ‘perfect and free individuals :’

‘Who has gone farthest? for I would go farther,
And who has been just? for I would be the most just person of
the earth, . . .
And who benevolent? for I would show more benevolence than
all the rest, . . .
And who thinks the amplest thoughts? for I would surround
those thoughts.’

But, best of all, this struggle, toward such high aims, is not in vain. The individual may fall short now and throughout this one life; but he has a long future to retrieve himself, all eternity in which to perfect himself. No poet, not even Browning, who likewise rejoices in struggle, dis-

appointment, defeat, as the means and entrances to a higher life for the soul — no poet prophesies of ultimate victory with a more thrilling voice than Whitman's :

' Years of the modern ! years of the unperform'd !

Your horizon rises, I see it parting away for more august dramas, . . .

The perform'd America and Europe grow dim, retiring in shadow behind me,

The unperform'd, more gigantic than ever, advance, advance upon me. '

' After me, vista !

O I see life is not short, but immeasurably long,

I henceforth tread the world chaste, temperate, an early riser, a steady grower,

Every hour the semen of centuries, and still of centuries. '

' Amelioration is one of the earth's words. '

' The sun and stars that float in the open air,

The apple-shaped earth and we upon it, surely the drift of them is something grand,

I do not know what it is except that it is grand, and that it is happiness. '

' All parts away for the progress of souls,

All religion, all solid things, arts, governments — all that was or is apparent upon this globe or any globe, falls into niches and corners before the procession of souls along the grand roads of the universe. . .

Forever alive, forever forward, . . .

They go ! they go ! I know that they go, but I know not where they go,

But I know that they go toward the best — toward something great. '

In his parting chant, ' So Long, ' he becomes more specific :

' To conclude, I announce what comes after me.

I announce natural persons to arise,

I announce justice triumphant,

I announce uncompromising liberty and equality, . . .

I announce the Union more and more compact, indissoluble,

I announce splendors and majesties to make all the previous politics of the earth insignificant.

I announce the great individual, fluid as Nature, chaste, affectionate, compassionate, fully arm'd.
I announce a life that shall be copious, vehement, spiritual, bold,
I announce an end that shall lightly and joyfully meet its translation.'

Here as elsewhere we encounter Whitman's reliance upon immortality. The hope, the promise he holds out for the future, is not to the individual for his present existence, it is for the race that shall be; and it is for us now present in life only as in some happier incarnation we shall share in a universal betterment.

There is evident in Whitman's doctrine of progress, of the relation of past, present and future, a sort of confident fatalism. This vast onward movement will take place. The past was what it had to be, the present is the inevitable outgrowth of the past, and the future in its turn will arrive, resistlessly, surely. In this vast conception the individual may seem to count for nothing. What he does or omits to do is of no consequence. But this conclusion, though one that followers of Whitman are a little apt to make, is a fallacy not found, I think, in the writings of Whitman himself. In this paper I have shown, on the contrary, what great weight he attaches to individuality. In his view, the future progress of mankind is to come about through causes, and those causes are men themselves. Men, individuals, are the very agents of progress. And we become such agents only through that perpetual struggle and effort for better things, that development of 'great personality,' that ceaseless striving which to Whitman was, as I have indicated, of the essence of true living.

With the pessimist philosophy of Schopenhauer, Whitman had no affinity by temperament or conviction. He was no preacher of resignation, like Arnold. He could not be a poet of revolt, like Shelley, for he was too well contented with the world as it is and with the future he assuredly foresees. Nor did he think with Pope that whatever is, is right; whatever is, he thought, is as it has to be for the present; there is dreadful and hideous evil, but it will disappear, and the true man, the blessedest man, is he who contributes to its disappearance. Finally, Whitman is not an oriental infidel like Omar. He would, indeed, enjoy life to the full, but in his great 'Song of Joys' he does not so much as mention the wine-cup, in which the Persian found his chief retreat from the oppression of a hopeless and chaotic world.

Whitman's view is ampler, clearer, saner, more satisfying than those of the poets I have named. His is a philosophy of health, labor, self-respect,

tranquillity and hope; a confidence in the universe; a reaching out for all the delights of every bodily sense, and yet an aspiration for the joys of high thought and spiritual growth. In him, body and soul are beautifully balanced; but for him the soul of a man is the supreme reality, it holds within itself the purport of all that is; and its destiny is sublime, reaching through the institutions of democracy and comradeship, to the reign of justice, and the attainment of human ideals of personality and of social life.

A GROUP OF POEMS

BY ISABELLA HOWE FISKE


FLAME

INERTIA ante-natal
 And vast, potential power
 Brought to earth, splendid, fatal,
 My due, predestined hour.

Flint struck on steel, resistant
 I spoke in flash of fire
 And men knew, from the instant,
 Promethean desire.

I knew not bound nor pity
 With easy might and main
 I swept the guarded city
 And the unventured plain.

Flame in a windy forest,
 Smoke in a lurid sky, —
 My early boast and prowess,
 I thought not to lay by.

Yet I, whose rude defiance
 Laughed at man's primal needs,
 Now, proselyte of science, 
 Kneel and confess his creeds.

To me it has been given
To shine in lightning wild
And in hearth fires of even
Lit by a little child.

I pass from devastation,
Ascend a better height,
I rise to ministration
From holocaust to light.

JUSTICE

INTO the hearts of the flowers
Are driven the stakes of man,
To the hush of their woodland hours
Comes the builder's caravan :

The progress of man is by clamor,
The way of the wood is peace,
And the blows of the axe and hammer
Have tortured the stature of trees :

Bruised is the grass of the meadows,
Fled are the birds that sing,
Strange to the wood are the shadows
Of gable and cornice and wing : —

Sinister, ugly and cruel,
They creep to the edge of the glade,
Homes for whose beam and fuel
The cedar has felt the blade :

Man's stagings as scaffolds, truly,
Whereon the Pride of the Sun
Suffers his fate unduly
And a race unto death is done.

Think well, O man, the slayer,
Of right to build be sure. —
Thou art the wood's betrayer,
Save thou, as trees, be pure !

A GROUP OF POEMS

TO A CHILD

FRAIL little cloud-breath,
Wraith from a veiled sky,
Fragile as sea-drift,
Stirred by another's sigh, —
Is mortal tenure such,
Changeling Elysian?
Illusive of touch,
Mystic of vision?
Yes, thou hast spoken
Words that are mortal
And shalt be broken
Passing death's portal.

Wondering, we see thee,
Wondering, thou gazest;
What is the Lethe
That thy glance 'mazest?
How can we, earthy,
Ever believe thee?
How are we worthy
Thus to receive thee?
Something prophetic
Shines from thy musing,
Something ascetic
In thy earth-choosing.
Yet can we never
Learn of thee, master,
Nor teach thee ever
Of our disaster.

THE AMERICAN BROTHER OF THE POET KEATS

BY FELIX J. KOCH

NOWHERE in the annals of English literature is there recorded a more pathetic romance than the career which Dame Fortune evolved for the brother of the poet Keats in the West,—in Cincinnati and Louisville,—in the early days of the century just passed. It is a career which, while concerned with a man famous only as another's brother, is still indissolubly connected with the story of our literature,—since it was from the correspondence passing between George Keats and the poet, John, that much, if not most, of the biographer's material has been obtained.

Strangely enough the actual circumstances of the life of the Keats family in this country are rather shrouded in mystery.

John Keats, the poet, was born in London, to the family of the head-hostler of a livery-stable, who, having served several years' apprenticeship, aspired to and received the hand of his employer's daughter. Of this union, John Keats was the oldest child, born October 31, 1796. Three other children by this marriage lived to maturity,—George Keats, Thomas (who died in 1818), and Frances Mary, afterward Mrs. Llanos.

Rev. James Freeman Clarke, while minister at the Unitarian Church in Louisville, today one of the wealthiest congregations in the city, wrote an entertaining account of the boyhood of these men, the facts obtained, of course, from George, then a parishioner of his. George Keats, it would seem, was a child of rather pacific temperament; but was drawn into combat time and again, to protect his rather quarrelsome elder brother. On leaving school, he served in the counting-room of his guardian; but, unable to endure this one's brother, and too indolent in matters of the sort to explain the situation to his employer, was forced to seek work elsewhere, and finally hit upon the task of housekeeper to his brothers, a position kept until the acquisition of the paternal inheritance, which permitted him to marry the daughter of one Col. Wylie. This match, however, very shortly proved the patrimony utterly insufficient to the social status that such a marriage meant, being but five thousand dollars

in all, so that, chancing on a volume of enticements set forth by a land-agent named Fearson, George Keats resolved to emigrate to the States, where, he felt, the snug little inheritance (the greater part an entail from a grandmother) would prove abundantly adequate. Consequently, shortly after the publication of 'Endymion,' George and John Keats parted, the poet and a friend accompanying the emigrant to Lancaster, whence John continued on his tour of the Lakes and Scotland.

Rev. Clarke gives an account of the journey of Mr. and Mrs. Keats from this point, of the groom of twenty-one and the girl of bare sixteen; of their landing in New York, and the bitter realization that, even in the twenties, five thousand dollars would not permit of setting up in the sea-board towns in the fashion they cared to assume; the consequent purchase of carriage and horses at Philadelphia, and the journey to Pittsburgh; then the trip down the Ohio by keel-boat (the horses being sent ahead, over-land), with the romantic strolls 'cross curves indulged in by the couple, to relieve the monotony of the slow river-ride.

Before leaving England, the famous 'letters of the brothers Keats' go to show,—George had arranged for the purchase of 1,400 acres of land in the vicinity of Cincinnati, but just where this tract was located it seems impossible to discover. The Keats family, on arrival at the Queen city, engaged in a 'mercantile enterprise,' but what and where is likewise a mystery. The old city directories of 1819 and '25, the only ones available for the decade, date just prior to and shortly after their residence, and files of the *Western Spy*, while containing advertisements for 'drawing and painting' by their friend 'Mr. Audubon' (with whom Keats stopped for some time at Henderson, Ky., prior to moving to Louisville), fail to make any mention of the name.

George Keats came to Cincinnati resolved to 'be a farmer and work with his hands,' and hence the purchase of the land. Business of a mercantile sort, however, probably attracted him away from farming, and its failure, after perhaps a half-year's trial, caused the family to move down river to Louisville. A letter to the poet, almost immediately after their arrival at the Falls City, announces the birth of the eldest son.

About a year after coming to America, and almost as soon as wife and child were settled at Louisville, George Keats returned to England for a brief visit to his brother, and, incidentally, to collect what remained of the estate of the elder brother, Tom, who had died in the preceding months. During this visit, the poet, who was now in the direst financial straits, managed so skillfully to conceal from George his abject poverty,

as not alone to receive no aid from him, but, also, actually to secure for George,—by hook or crook,—what he would never have plead for, for his own purposes, . . . a loan of seven hundred pounds. *This* when George, while far from wealthy, had ample means to set John upon his feet, financially, again.

With those seven hundred pounds George Keats returned to Louisville. Hardly away, however, and it became known that the fairly prosperous American brother had carried away from the poet, whose poverty was a matter of common record and whose honesty had proved the sole basis for his obtaining the loans made George, so large a sum, when criticism, on both sides the Atlantic, waxed torrid; no explanation offered by either brother would be accepted as to the true state of ignorance on the part of George, and press and pulpit indulged in the most violent calumnies upon this breach of the 'most ordinary fraternal affection.'

Nothing appearing from either brother proving effective,—John's letters being accepted as mere natural shielding of an inhuman brother; George's as external excuses,—George Keats hardened his heart to the injustice; but the pain still rankled as he realized the indignity that threatened to go down in the biographies of his brother, and then and there he vowed to refuse his aid, forever, to all persons who might in any wise seek information for the press. Still further, then, was he embittered, when, on the occasion of the poet's death, he having cheerfully paid all John's many debts, and most probably the loan for that ill-fated seven hundred pounds sterling, the whole matter of his former 'parsimony' was rehearsed, with the slur of the reviewers that the present payment of debts was done merely in hope of public exculpation of former injustices, or else as an act of contrition for breach of family ties to which public censure alone had brought a recognition. More often, still, this matter of paying the debts of the deceased was omitted altogether in the poet's biography, while column on column was given to the 'story' of the 'Cain and Abel affair.' It is doubtful if ever before or since, in all the annals of British or American literature, a man has been forced to undergo more scathing criticism, unjustly, than that to which George Keats was subjected. Obviously, if there was any one directly to blame in the matter, it was the poet himself, who, by hook or crook, throughout George's visit (which terminated in January of 1820), managed to put up a fair show of position, and later never once hinted at his needs or hope of repayment.

The letters that then followed to George Keats, at Louisville, from

the suffering poet are curious affairs,—written in diary-form, as it were; added to three times a week, and mailed at intervals never exceeding three weeks. Each brother vied with the other in preserving the old affection in this wise, and it is from the missives that one learns that in Louisville, George Keats had associated, under the name of George Keats and Co., with the leading founders of the West, as well as operated a saw mill at 'the Falls,' the felling of trees for which he superintended daily in the neighboring forests. George, too, tells John there of the state of society at Louisville, which, 'consists of three-penny parties and half-penny dances.' On the return from the lamentable visit to England, George Keats invested his fortune in lumber, and, amassing no little fortune, erected a mill on First Street, between Washington and the 'river.' In 1836 the handsome 'Englishman's temple,' as it was called, now the Elks' Temple of Louisville, was built by him, and here the foundations of what has since become one of the first families of Kentucky were laid.

In a little volume, on an out-of-the-way shelf of the Cincinnati Public Library,—a book now probably out of print for many years, and its very author forgotten,—an interesting account is given of the Keats fortunes at Louisville; probably the only book, not even excepting the actual biographies of the family, where their little-known side of the Keats career is treated.

To this hospitable home, in the bustling Kentucky town, we are told, there came the last of the bulky letters from John,—a series begun in 1818, when Miss Brawne's influence was paramount with the poet, and extending through the period of composition of the 'Hyperion,' of the 'Eve of St. Agnes.' as to whose composition they give practically all our knowledge, and then the era of George's rapid advance toward affluence, and of John's equally rapid decline to abject poverty, almost to that death which he had ever foretold would overtake him early in life. To George Keats and his accomplished wife, the poet addressed many lines, and George, too, in turn, tried his hand at a sonnet. 'To G. A. W.,' is addressed to this Mrs. Keats.

George Keats, at this period, was a man to attract the passer-by—a 'heavy bar of observation' over the eye, indicative of strong business perception; a face bespeaking ability of mind and great feeling, combined with practical energy. His was the countenance of just the sort of man one might expect to desert the church into which he had been confirmed by no less a prelate than the Archbishop of Canterbury, rather than acquiesce in the thoughts of another, which could not coincide

with his own. George Keats was noted, also, as without an equal in all matters literary in the West, at that time. There was, however, another side to this Kentuckian's nature, and that the physical side. Keats could put up a good fight, when there was need of it and there is record of the proprietor of the leading saw and flour mills of Louisville, 'mixing it up' with the local Congressman, Breckenridge, over a business difficulty, with the result that Keats did not come out second best by a good deal.

The letters of this period show well the condition of Kentucky, in the 'twenties,—not much worse off then than she is today,—and George speaks in them of the flying swans, and the storks and cranes, and occasional eagle, seen from the mills, and of the blue grass and the blossoming peach-orchards. We learn of his home, too, of the mantel-shelf noted for its tastefulness, with the picture of George Keats directly over the center; with Shakespeare and the poet's brother, Tom, above; and Beaumont and Fletcher at either side. George Keats, too, tells us that he served in the city council of Louisville and was one of the founders of the present city school-system.

Just at the height of this era of affluence, when the critics had seemingly ceased their scoring, and the family fortunes promised to reach an unparalleled zenith, there came into the life of George Keats a second sorrow. Like Blennerhasset, whose ruined 'castle' still moulders in decay on an island in the same muddy river that drove Keats' mills, George Keats, while in the hey-day of prosperity, was doomed to lose all his worldly goods through the influence of a supposed friend, a man who, only too soon after the signing of the fatal papers, proved a defaulter of the first water, and as result, George Keats was a ruined man. Like Blennerhasset, too, there was a daughter left to comfort him, a sweet girl, pride of her father's heart, likewise of poetic temperament, and said to have resembled greatly her uncle, John, both in facial lineament and in bent of mind. Isabella Keats was fond of painting, fond of the pen, and her very name suggests the heroine of her uncle's poem about the 'Pot of Basil,'—a poem scarcely less pathetic than the life-story of this girl.

George Keats' death, in 1841, came as direct result of the shock of the financial troubles in which he had become involved, and closely subsequent thereupon the daughter's strange career was brought to an end. Of course there are two versions of the story, that of the family (none, however, of the patronymic Keats, which, so far as can be learned, is now extinct in the West), and the other, the more current recital.

According to the first of these reports, Isabella Keats was a lass free of all morbidness. In the dusk of a summer's evening she lay down for a nap on the sofa, at her home here in Louisville, not noticing a gun carelessly left beside the arras by a brother on returning from a long hunting journey. Accidentally the dozing girl's foot touched the trigger, and death was the almost instantaneous result.

The other version is that given by the poet, Piatt, in the old *Commercial Gazette*, and he would have it that a love-affair was at the bottom of the matter. As he puts it, 'After the report of a gun, Isabella Keats was found mortally wounded, in the parlor of the old house, and death ensued in an hour or so.' Then he adds, 'Shakespeare, I believe, leaves it doubtful, if he would have the reader consider Ophelia a suicide or an unhappy young girl, accidentally drowned.'

Certain it is, however, that in the fall of 1890 an elderly gentleman came frequently, to the Keats mansion at Louisville, and asked to be left alone in the old parlor, where he had parted with Isabella Keats long years before. Of course rumors grew apace, and in 'Historic Southern Cities' we are told that the riddle was eventually solved,—that the visitor was a Californian, come to saunter over old familiar places and to visit the room where she had jilted him, or he had broken troth with her. Isabella and he had parted, let it suffice to say, and the blow doubtless led the woman to seek speedy death. This fact once made public, the old man left,—probably once again for the distant West and since then no more is known of the great romance of old Louisville.

Out in the ancient Western Cemetery, at the Falls City,—a graveyard being converted into a public park,—George Keats was buried first. Some years ago, a handsome cross of deep green stone, set on a rough granite pedestal, was erected at 'Cave Hill,' the finest cemetery, by all odds, in the South, and there, with others of the family Keats, George and Isabella lie.

Beside this daughter, who died at the age of seventeen, George Keats had other children, among them the mother of the author, John G. Speed, assistant to Lord Houghton in his famous edition of the poems of Keats. Mrs. Keats, too, re-married after George's death, her second husband being the celebrated Jeffrey, another collaborator of the works of Keats.

Strange, it seems, that of the hundreds of visitors thronging Cave Hill every fair day in the year, so few make pilgrimages to the grave of the poet's brother. George Keats was to John what Mrs. Shelley proved for the atheist poet; and what Dorothy Wordsworth has become for the

Bard of Grasmere Vale, . . . without these, and their humble work, our knowledge of the greater ones would be forever incomplete. In fact, not one of the numerous attendants could direct the visitor to the lot, and it was only after a protracted search that we chanced upon it. One of those quiet valleys, which the poet Keats delighted in, with a placid pool and a flock of swans, rolls off from the graves of George and Isabella Keats, and in the pines about the ivy-covered cross the bluebirds, of which the poet-brother wrote, keep sacred their memory.

FATE: A PARABLE

BY CHARLOTTE PORTER

I POURED out my heart in a throbbing lay,
One half-happy day.
And, then, when I wrote it, a wind arose,
A trickstering time-serving wind of prose,
And blew it away.

Far and away, out of grasp, out of reach!
It seemed that all speech,
All sweet fruitage of song redeeming pain
The barren soul lost with that heart-wrung strain,
And could not beseech.

The written was written: the lost was lost.
By the calm fate crossed,
The grief weighed too sore for any grief more.
Then, the windfall of fate a new fate bore,
And back the scroll tossed!

Wild heart! Take counsel how still the Soul stays
Through half-happy days;
Of its nature unaware wise to wait
The ripening counter-stroke of Master-fate
No fate but obeys!

TWO POEMS OF LEPROSY

BY ARTHUR FRÉMONT RIDER

THE poem entitled 'Happy' in Tennyson's 'Demeter' volume reminds one at once of the beautiful little story of 'The Leper' in Swinburne's first series of 'Poems and Ballads.' The two poems are so similar in theme and setting, though differing materially in treatment, as to invite comparison.

Tennyson's poem is in the first person: the speaker is the wife, who voluntarily from her great love for her husband, goes into a living death for his sake, shares the exile and degradation of his leprosy in order to be with him and minister unto him, glad that by this supreme self-denial she may clear away every shadow of his doubt of her love. Swinburne, through the lips of her lover, tells the touching history of Yolande de Sallieres, who was smitten with leprosy, or as the Great Chronicle quaintly phrases it in the Old French: '*etoit atteincte et touse guastee de coi vilain mal.*' The man who gladly goes to die with her—for now the case is reversed—is a poor clerk. In the old days before her desolation, he says—

'Mere scorn God knows she had of me,
A poor scribe, nowise great or fair,
Who plucked his clerk's hood back to see
Her curled up lips and amorous hair.'

But when—

'All they spat out and cursed at her
And cast her forth for a base thing.'—

the humble clerk, whose sweet love outlived all the blind passion of those who loved but 'her fair body,'—he said of her in her leprosy only—

'Fools were they surely, seeing not
How sweeter than all sweet she is.'

With a loving scorn that scandalled those who scorned him, he tells—

'I hid her in this wattled house,
I served her water and poor bread.
For joy to kiss between her brows
Time upon time I was nigh dead.'

When, at last, with all his tenderest care she dies, his only lament is —

‘A trouble takes me; I know not
If all were done well, all well said,
No word or tender deed forgot.’

I have outlined Swinburne’s poem at somewhat greater length because it is probably less familiar.

Now it appears to me that Tennyson’s poem is much less finished artistically and is, as a bit of narration and character study, less satisfying, for reasons that I will attempt to make clear.

Both poems are of about the same historical period, the thirteenth century. Swinburne, by his choice of metre, his selection of significant details, his vocabulary and phraseology, attempts, and at least partly succeeds, in reproducing the mediæval atmosphere. Swinburne uses the ballad stanza and introduces the wrenched accents common in that form. Take for example the opening stanza —

‘Nothing is better, I well think,
Than love; the hidden well-water
Is not so delicate to drink :
This was well seen of me and her.’

Tennyson uses an iambic heptameter line which gives an unfortunate sing-song effect not at all in harmony with the subject.

‘Foul ! foul ! the word was yours not mine,
I worship that right hand
Which fell’d the foes before you as the
Woodman fells the wood.’

Now notice a few of the details, strikingly significant of the period, which Swinburne skilfully introduces : —

‘(Cold *rushes* for such little feet —
Both feet could lie into my hand.)’

or this —

‘Here in this wretched *wattled* house’

or this —

‘I brought him by a privy way
Out of her *lattice*.’

For examples of the introduction of antiquated words or phrasings, or rather perhaps of common words with antiquated meanings, besides the above, compare —

‘I served her wine and *curious* meat.’

or —

‘*Sweet friend, God give you *thank* and grace.*’

or this passage throughout —

‘I said, ‘Bethink yourself how love
Fared in us twain, what either did;
Shall I unclothe my soul thereof?
That I should do this God forbid.’

These, and numerous other instances, show how well Swinburne, like his friends in poetry, catches and reproduces the mediæval spirit.

Tennyson has done nothing of the kind. His poem, though set in a distant age, is inherently modern in phraseology and spirit. Take for example such lines as the following —

‘Who am, and was, and will be his, his own and only own,’

or —

‘We planted both together, happy in our marriage morn?’

or —

‘And moving each to music, soul in soul and light in light.’

or —

‘See, I sinned but for a moment. I repented and repent
And trust myself forgiven by the God to whom I kneel.’

Careful search reveals but two words here used with aught of the mediæval flavor — the nouns ‘fell’ and ‘leech’ — and no obsolete constructions.

Nor is Tennyson’s work as satisfying in its delineation of character, and consequently (since narrative arises from the mutual interplay of characters) in its narration. We have a greater sympathy with Swinburne’s characters because they are more human. Tennyson, here at least, in his idealism forgets the pettiness, nay, the sinfulness of common men and women. Ulric in this little poem is another King Arthur, an ideal knight, beautiful, strong, brave, and, so far as Tennyson tells, sinless. His wife’s only fault was a bit of coquetry — you can call it nothing more — to make her husband jealous. Yet these two beings of superhuman rectitude are grievously afflicted: furthermore, even in their affliction, they display a superhuman self-denial and purity.

Not so with Swinburne. His hero is no great stainless knight: no, only —

‘A poor scribe, nowise great and fair’

who is made by his great, ever-to-be-unsatisfied love a go-between; not boastful of aught his own, even his love, for he says —

'It may be all my love went wrong —
 A scribe's work writ awry and blurred,
 Scrawled after the blind evensong —
 Spoilt music with no perfect word.'

And she, she was '*souvents fois accolée et basée. . . avoyt este moult belle et gracieuse de form. . . et de vie lascive.*' Aye, so great was the love of that poor clerk, that he took pleasure in —

'That knight's gold hair she chose to love,
 His mouth she had such will to kiss.'

Tennyson's woman worships from afar the 'right hand' of her knight, and to show her love ventures but to hold out to him the plucked rose: and she was his wife. The little clerk does not scruple to say —

'God hates me now that I can kiss
 Her eyes.'

and afterward —

'Six months, and I sit still and hold
 In two cold palms her cold two feet.
 Her hair, half grey half ruined gold,
 Thrills me and burns me in kissing it.'

Ah, but was not their love with all its apparent earthliness as pure and unselfish as love can be? Listen.

'She said, "Be good with me; I grow
 So tired for shame's sake, I shall die
 If you say nothing:" even so.
 And she is dead now, and shame put by.
 'Yea, and the scorn she had of me
 In the old time, doubtless vexed her then.
 I never should have kissed her. See
 What fools God's anger makes of men.'

There is more true devotion, more loving tenderness, more humanity in those eight lines than in all Tennyson's poem, graceful and beautiful as that is.

GERMAN-AMERICAN LITERATURE

BY AMELIA VON ENDE

THE German writer of America is a man without a country. When he left his native soil and came to the new world in quest of freedom, wealth or rest from interference with his personal happiness, the contrast between the Old and the New world palled upon him: the difference between conditions which have naturally evolved in the course of ages of slow growth, and a society which represents a civilisation which developed under the stress of unusual struggle for the earth's material treasures and the steady influx of heterogeneous European elements, not always favorable to the intellectual or the artistic interests of the country, was extremely painful. Deep in the soul of the newcomer regret began to stir — homesickness. But the ships were burned behind him; pride forbade return and dire necessity made it imperative to stay and make the best of the situation. So the keynote of the nostalgic mood was struck and has continued to reverberate in the German literature of America to this very day. The European point of view remained, for in the effort to escape from unfamiliar and uncongenial surroundings, the newcomer sought the society of those who spoke his language, with whom he had common associations and memories. He settled down in a German part of the town, where he had decided to live, became engulfed in the whirlpool of German club-life, and remained an alien.

This bald statement of facts hardly requires any comment. With very few exceptions the Germans of America live in exclusively German surroundings, either in the German parts of the large cities or in rural communities where the German element predominates. Few have spanned in travel the length and width of the continent. Fewer have seen American life from the inside. Some have not even mastered the language. This limited knowledge of the country and of the people which have given it its official language, the Anglo-American, had the curious effect of throwing them back upon their old associations and perpetuated their foreign, the outsider's, view of things American. If they earned enough of American money to take them to Germany in their vacations, they were delighted, as visitors and vacationists are likely to be, and gradually invested their old home with a halo, little justified by some features of Germany as it is to-day.

If their purse did not permit periodical restorations of this halo, they drudged discontentedly, their feet planted on American soil, their heads far away in European clouds, and became chronic grumblers. There is something pathetic in the self-inflicted fate of these German *deracines*, these men without a country.

Yet with all the persistence which characterizes their attachment to their native soil, some discovered that the land of their heart's desire was no longer the land they had known. Germany has changed within the last quarter of the century. Military triumphs and material successes have left their mark. Some found the sweetheart of their youth fat and fatuous, or bent and wrinkled, and they turned away, the sharp pain of a shattered ideal in their heart. Some recovered from their disillusion and proceeded to plant their feet more firmly upon the soil of their new home, to accept American life as it is, to become citizens in fact, and not only by virtue of their naturalization papers. Others did not recover from the shock, and instead of conquering the present, the nearest-at-hand, buried themselves in the past. Gradually the weakly sentimentality which was the first natural expression of their experience, was enforced by a spirit of fault-finding, due to the narrowness of their vision, and the outsider's view became characteristic of much that has been called German-American literature. Only recently on reading a dramatic attempt by an author who had earnestly tried to strike root on this side of the ocean, to some people interested in a possible production of that work, I was told that the play was impossible, because the author's view of certain phases of American life was an outsider's view. The same holds true of German-American fiction. One need only to see the term 'yankee' indiscriminately applied to the Anglo-American east or west, north or south, and the point of view from which these stories are written is obvious. The grosser, the more superficial traits in American life are unduly emphasized and exaggerated, the finer, less striking, but no less typical, are overlooked. The average German-American knows the Anglo-American whom he meets at the bar, over the counter, in his office; he knows the American woman as he sees her in the shopping-district, in the church-pew, at the opera. But of the men and women that represent the real stamina of the nation, of the provincials and the rustics especially, true products of the American soil and of American surroundings, as much as any white people can be — of these elements, far outnumbering the population of the large cities, which is forever assimilating miscellaneous foreign elements, he knows nothing.

Moreover, the average German in America, living in the intellectual

atmosphere of his youth, of a past period, foreign to the present in both countries, is not even in touch with the art and the letters of the Germany of to-day. The effect upon the literary work coming from his ranks, is disastrous. With no reflection upon the quality of verse that has come from the Suabian school, it is to be regretted that the lyric note struck by the average German-American poet is an echo of Uhland, Moericke and their contemporaries, because it is an anachronism. Heine is philosophically a little beyond him. The exquisite formalism of Platen defies his attempts at imitation. Of the later poets Dahn appeals to him by virtue of his historical and mythical nationalism, Wolf by his troubadour pose, Baumbach by his amiable conviviality. These three stand sponsors to much of what is best in the German verse produced in America to-day. But by the really modern spirit, by the magic wand of that sorcerer Nietzsche, none of the German poets in America have been touched, except one. The peculiar trait of our time tacitly to recognize the unity of all arts, is also nowhere discernible. Yet this trait is directly responsible for some of the most exquisite imagery in the verse of Germany's moderns. Even art criticism can no longer limit itself to the terminology of the one art under consideration, but borrows right and left in acknowledgment of the intimate correlation of the arts. The distinct traces of the influence of Boecklin's spirit in Hauptmann's 'Sunken Bell' are ample proof of the poet's indebtedness to the sister arts. But the attitude of the average German-American towards art is the same as towards the literature of present-day Germany. From the profound symbolism of Boecklin, Klinger and Stuck he turns away bewildered.

All this wealth of inspiration is lost upon the average German poet in America. Not this country alone is a world, which he has yet to discover and to make his own. If he succeeds, he will strike different tunes than we are accustomed to hear in the columns of our German-American press, where the lyric poem is a welcome stop-gap, but the more ambitious forms are barred, unless they commemorate some timely or festive occasion. Yet there is another deficiency in the development of the German-American poet. He has not sounded the depths of life. He does not heed the cry for truth. Hence his verse misses the convincing note of real experience. Perhaps, if it were otherwise, he would have even less readers than he has now. For considering the strength of the German population in this country, its poets have an alarmingly small audience. The average German buys few books; if he does, he chooses the old familiar friends of his youth. Wilhelm von Polenz, who took pains, during his quiet tour of the country, to get a

glimpse of the inner life of both Anglo-American and Germans, was appalled by the few books he saw in most German-American families, and by their evident failure to keep abreast of the times.

Without a knowledge of the curious conditions hampering the efforts of the German writer in America, what is called German-American literature could not be understood. It is practically an unknown quantity. When I was asked some years ago to furnish a German encyclopedia with a review of German-American literature, I had to advertise, asking German writers in America to send me their published works. I received enough material to fill the allotted space, but the quality was discouraging. Yet this country has had and still has a respectable percentage of Germans of culture. It has received at two periods, one might say, the flower of the German nation. In the thirties of the last century came the fugitives from the reaction which had followed upon the Napoleonic wars: the Lieber, Follen, Muench, Wagner and Wollenweber, whose names are closely connected with the history of the German press in America. They were thoroughly dissatisfied with conditions abroad and earnestly tried to make the New World their home. So did the group of men who came after the revolution of 1848, that fraction of our German population which has probably had a greater influence upon the public life of this country than any that succeeded them: Caspar Butz, Eduard Dorsch, Karl Heinzen, Konrad Krez, Johann Straubenmueller, and foremost among them Karl Schurz, who may justly be considered an ideal German-American. These men were all philosophers, took things as they found them, and did not whine. Some, like Dorsch, had a strong sense of humor, which lightened their burden. In others the spirit of the time, critical and polemic, found effective utterance. Dorsch was a physician and had a cynical delight in inviting his readers to his dissecting room and deftly applying the scalpel-knife to some object of real life. Heinzen grimly swung the satirical club; he was a born fighter. Both were sturdy representatives of the analytical intellect of their race.

Among their contemporaries the intellectual fermentation of the period is perceptible in varied degrees. Krez struck a note of resignation which heralded the nostalgic mood, soon to become typical. He sang in many variations the bitter knowledge that Dame Care could be encountered wherever one went in search of happiness, and that no physician knew the remedy whereby to restore just one day of youth. Stronger through his invincible optimism was Ernst Anton Zuendt. In him the '*Ca ira*' of the revolution found a more distinct echo; he believed in the future and was content that we should struggle in pain and die in the moment of the triumph,

that new deaths might grow out of new lives. Zuendt was the most successful of German-American dramatists. The most remarkable poet of that generation is Udo Brachvogel; the quality of his verse, unfortunately never collected, is high. He has a fine sense of form, a command of language and color. Brachvogel is also one of those German poets in America, who tried to familiarize their readers with American letters. Among other things he translated some of Bret Harte's earlier masterpieces. Eduard Leyh's translation of Joaquin Miller's 'Arizonian' and Frank Siller's rendering of Longfellow's 'Evangeline' are also creditable pieces of work. But the man who worked most industriously and successfully in this field is Karl Knortz; he deserves special credit for translations from Whitman, anthologies of American verse and numerous essays on American life and letters.

There is no doubt that the presence of a magazine devoted to the literary interests of these writers would have been an invaluable incentive. In the seventies a small group of idealists that stood apart from the great mass of the German element found such an organ in the 'Freidenker' of Milwaukee, a liberal weekly. They were people in touch with the new thought in Germany; they were familiar with the new movements in religion, philosophy and social science. Many of them were born reformers, some were prophets, and their poetry was the medium to give voice to their message. In that publication some spun subtle philosophical webs, others struggled to express their religious or social convictions; it was mostly Tendenz poetry. Only one man in that group persistently avoided subordinating his art to these convictions. Robert Reitzel's Anacreontics were the most enjoyable fruit that this garden offered. When in later years he founded the 'Arme Teufel,' that *enfant terrible* of German-American journalism, which would not swear allegiance to any of the numerous 'isms' in the air, but attacked Philistinism of all kinds, he became a power, which cannot be esteemed too highly. For Reitzel had the unerring æsthetic instinct and the catholic taste of the true artist. He was a dispenser of beauty. Whatever treasures he found in his rambles in the world's literature, he shared with his readers. He was the first to make the German-Americans, who did not scoff at the little sheet with the puzzling title, acquainted with Gottfried Keller, Conrad Ferdinand Meyer, Hans-jacob, Weber of Dreizehnlinden fame, Liliencron, Bierbaum, Ada Negri, and many others. He was the greatest prose writer among the Germans of America, a master of the *causerie*, which is a form rather foreign to the ponderous character of German prose. Whether he initiated his readers

into the beauties of some literary find, or pictured the still life of his sick-room, or revelled in reminiscences of his student years, he always fascinated. Some of these *causeries* were exquisite prose poems, once read, never forgotten.

In the attitude of Reitzel towards the Germans of his time, here and abroad, there was something of the spirit of Heine, with whom he shared the same slow death. He was a genuine German at heart, but he had a sincere dislike for the cheap and commonplace expressions of patriotism and was consequently labelled 'un-German' by the average German-American. The press, too, had little understanding for his unique personality. While some of the greatest German writers abroad spontaneously expressed their appreciation of the work Reitzel was doing in his little paper, on this side of the ocean he was either ignored or vituperated. Even his death, which called forth special articles in some literary magazines abroad, failed to rouse the Germans of this country to any sign of recognition. A small group of gifted men and women, who had found in Reitzel a friendly critic, after the discontinuation of his paper were sorely embarrassed. A few of them have since found the way into publications with a larger circle of readers, others have lapsed into silence. One of the most talented, Edna Fern (Frau Fernande Richter) of St. Louis, who expresses in graceful allegory and with a touch of sportive humor serious thoughts on life, has since published several volumes of poems and prose tales, some of which are distinctively individual.

Apart from the Reitzel group stands a thorough artist, Karl P. Kenkel of Chicago, who has to his credit a little master-piece of fiction published in a limited edition: '*Der Schaedel des Secundus Arbiter*.' It is a choice bit of psychology and very finely told. Another, even less known, writer of American birth and German parentage, is George Thorland, a native of San Francisco, but a resident of Munich. He is the author of a promising first effort in drama: '*Fasching*,' a thoroughly modern picture of the Munich *bohème*.

A link between the Old and the New, a man of firm adherence to established æsthetic creeds, but by no means insensible to the voice of the *Zeitgeist*, is Konrad Nies, the foremost poet of German America to-day. He is a romantic, but his romanticism is not of the mediæval type; it is rather an idealization of reality. Nies is one of the few later German Americans whose social conscience has been awakened. He feels the burden of poverty bowing down the masses, the stigma of ostracism branding those who disregard society's moral code, and his heart goes out to them

with profound human pity. His 'Song of the Wind' and the sonnet 'A Funeral' have breadth of vision, depth of feeling and an artistic quality rarely found in verse of this kind. His sympathetic view of humanity is equalled by a fine perception of nature. He is thoroughly acquainted with this country, lectures and the quest of health having taken him across the continent in all directions. His poems of the prairie, and his memories of Texas and California show a healthy appreciation of the boundless beauties of our soil. Few poems in German literature of to-day surpass the delicate sentiment and artistic distinction, with which he has embodied an experience in that little gem '*in heilfroher Stunde*.' The popular theme of wine, wife and song Konrad Nies varies in ballads and lyrics of stirring fire and dash. He is singularly definite of purpose, knows his way and pursues it with a certain mature consistency.

While Konrad Nies may be said to stand in the zenith of his powers, the work of the latest and youngest addition to the ranks of German-American writers holds out extraordinary possibilities for the future. Georg Sylvester Viereck is a phenomenon for which there is no parallel in the history of the world's literature. By rare circumstance and training he struck out into paths unknown to his fellow-poets in this country; neither has he much in common with youngest Germany abroad, although he passed his boyhood in Munich, the very heart of the new school. The son of a German father and a mother, German by blood, American by birth, this young man became an ardent worshipper at the shrines of Swinburne and Wilde. The perusal of some pathological works of the time may have contributed towards giving his mind a turn towards what is called decadence; and being an artist and falling naturally into an artist's pose, he assumed the pose of the decadent with marvellous success. Yet his decadence may not all be a pose or the product of a riotous imagination; experience has had some share in shaping the elusive, puzzling individuality of this boy of twenty. Viereck's field of vision is narrow, but it has depth. Of the two forces that govern the world, hunger and love, he acknowledges only the latter. His conception of love is philosophical and intensely human. As in a series of historical frescoes he unfolds in '*Aiogyne*' the love of the Eternal Woman; every stanza is a perfect picture. The exotic exuberance of his imagination frequently bewilders, but never repels. There is historic versimilitude, there is concreteness in his imagery, but there is nothing forced or ponderous; he has the light touch of the true artist. The beauty of '*Aiogyne*' consists in the very simplicity with which the theme is handled.

The originality of Viereck's verse is one of substance rather than of form. He employs the simple German meters, in which he excels. The easy and melodious flow of his rhythms is admirable. It were perhaps too much to expect from this youth, that he should always be himself; but it is to be hoped that he will soon emancipate himself from his English models, for wherever he follows them closely, his verse fails to convince. Nevertheless among his shorter poems, 'The Scarlet Flower' with the conventional Envoi is a little gem of sentiment and color, as for depth and intensity of dramatic feeling. 'Prince Carnivale,' which I quote is a translation by William Ellery Leonard:

Jingling bells and crackling whip,
Laughter and jest on every lip!
Thou drew'st thy gorgeous mantle tight —
But lo! I knew and marked at sight.

In all this dazzling mirth the best,
A golden star upon thy breast,
The kingly scepter in thy hand,
Thou gazest on thy fairyland.

Yet as thou tak'st the golden wine,
A glory round thy head will shine;
Then all will know along the hall
That it is thou— Prince Carnivale!

A shout goes up from row to row,
The viols strike and trumpets blow.
The quick hand swings the whip with art —
Thy laughter masters every heart.

But as into thine eyes I peep,
There looks on me a woe so deep —
All utterless and hidden all,
Unhappy prince of Carnivale.

'T is but a mask this jesting part !
Mankind's eternal pain thou art !
Once in the year like storm long pent,
Forth bursts thy heart-sick merriment.

An inward fire feverishly
 Tortures and goads the blood in thee,
 That on the moment thou dost forget
 How poor, how sick thy heart is yet.

Therefore my heart it burns for thee,
 Thou beautiful prince of faery,
 And oh, my love, my Prince, is great —
 As boundless as impassionate.

It is the deepest of all things
 How man unto his sorrow clings —
 His breast's own pain, supreme thro' all.
 So I love thee, Prince Carnivale.

Viereck's prose deserves no less mention, not only for its wordcraft, though it be of old coinage, but also for its fluency. He has written some curiously fanciful tales, some of them symbolistic, and a group of dramolets, remarkable alike for their boldness of conception and nakedness of treatment. They present a rare collection of decadent types of mankind and their correspondingly unelating relations. One only has to be excepted: *Der Schmetterling* (The Butterfly), a morality of marvelous philosophical latitude. While the others may have been conceived under the influence of Wilde and Shaw and betray an almost Celtic delight in his own cleverness and daring, 'The Butterfly' is probably the most original work the young author has so far produced. More than his poems these prose works show that Viereck is hampered by a temperamental narrowness of vision, distorted by his predilection for the abnormally exceptional in man's psychology. There are springs innumerable which he has yet to touch, worlds unlimited which he has yet to know: nature, the arts, the workaday world have much to teach him. If he will profit by their lessons, he may outgrow this narrowness, gain a just and sane view of the proportion of things, and become a power to be reckoned with in the future.

An anthology recently published in Germany, *Vom Lande des Sternenhimmels*, contains the names of over a hundred German-American poets now living in this country. The editor, Rev. G. A. Neeff, is himself a gifted writer, and in compiling and editing the work shows remarkable catholicity, for the book presents an extraordinary range of subjects and variety of forms. Paul Carus, the editor of the 'Monist' and 'Open Court,' sings of the unity

of the universe and of the immortality of the soul; Martin Drescher strikes the lighter vein of a charming Bohemian fatalism; George Edward is represented by love-lyrics exquisitely tender in sentiment and by a finely constructed ballad; Ernst Henrici, the author of a series of poetic dramas of great beauty, contributes a poem in free rhythms, commendable for its largeness of conception, and a certain grandeur of diction; Prof. Kuno Francke's name is attached to four poems, two of which are delightfully suggestive nature moods; the dramatic intensity of 'Carneval' comes as a surprise to those who know Prof. Muensterberg only from his philosophical side; and the editor himself proves his claim to a place among the German poets of America in selections remarkable alike for genuine sentiment as for dramatic power.

The general spirit of the book is wholesome, and compared with a collection of German-American verse published about ten years ago in Chicago shows a decided improvement both as to subject matter and manner. There is in it also an indication of a saner acceptance of American life. The literary quality, too, though very uneven, is undeniably superior to that of the older book.

LIFE AND LETTERS

MR. TROWBRIDGE'S BIRTHDAY

NOT long ago on the evening of September 18, there was a brilliant gathering at the home of Mrs. Albert Van Buren in Brookline to celebrate the seventy-ninth birthday of that friend of children large and small, John T. Trowbridge. This goodly company was composed of a group of clever men and women Mrs. Van Buren of Louisville, Kentucky, gathers about her in her Boston home and who call themselves 'The Rimers.' They all write verse and some of them poetry. It includes, besides, two artists of note, Mr. Albert Van Buren, who loves and portrays as if he loved it the sea in all its varied moods, and Mr. C. E. Dallin, the sculptor, who has recently been prominent in the newspapers as the successful competitor for the Soldiers' Monument to be erected in Syracuse.

As tributes to the poet these gentlemen presented him with 'poems' in their own line of art,—Mr. Van Buren with a fine marine piece and Mr. Dallin with a bas-relief portrait of Mr. Trowbridge—a striking likeness and of superior finish as a work of art.

The poet, screening his eyes from the light behind a lady's fan, accepted the various tributes and gifts with the grace, the modesty and the dignity which distinguish this gentle, manly genius. We print the poems below to tell their own story of the love and estimation which inspired them, many of them written in a few spare moments on the same day with the idea of making a merry evening, and with no thought of publication or the critical eye.

RONDEAU

To Mr. John Townsend Trowbridge

By Alicia K. Van Buren

You are so good that though I strive to state
 From early morning until evening late,
 The many kindly deeds that from you flow,
 I fail — they are too numerous to show,
 And my few words prove all inadequate.

I kneel, a trembling poor novice,
 To you who greet me at the Muses' gate,
 And ask a pardon you will grant I know,
 You are so good!

But fearing I am not endowed by fate,
 With power to give due praise, I hesitate
 To try (my little taper burns so low):
 I fear that just because I love you so
 I half-forget that you are likewise great —
 You are so good.

LINES TO JOHN TOWNSEND TROWBRIDGE

By Nixon Waterman

John T.
 Trowbridge, he
 Is a pretty good fellow, it seems to me.
 And, too, as a writer,

There's none of us brighter,
Unless it's myself, and it isn't polite or
Quite proper for me to inform you to-night
What I think of the beautiful sonnets I write.

For it's perfectly clear
We are all of us here
To make known, if we can,
What we think of the man
Who is not only older,
But younger and bolder
And kinder and sweeter,
In all ways completer
By far, than the rest of us.
The fairest and prettiest
The wisest and wittiest,
In viewing the serious work he has done
(Though it reads just as if he had done it for fun),
Must feel we can never
Do things quite so clever,
In story and verse
(Even I've written worse!)
Nor can we evolve such fine, lofty ideas
Of life and its God-given purpose as he has,
Nor match in our workaday ways and our looks
This good man both inside and out of his books.
Such songs! and such tales! and such plays! And still more he
Delights us in telling his own precious story!
For he just had to make that the best of his writing,
Since in it's a hero so good and inviting,
So gentle, so wise, and so loyal to duty,
The truth made him fill the book chock full of beauty!
But what is the use of attempting to tell you
My love for this man when I know very well you
Agree that mere words aren't enough to reveal it,
We are selfishly glad just to own and to feel it.
And so I remark, and my honest conviction
Is, no one will offer the least contradiction,
That John T.

Trowbridge, he
 Is a splendid young fellow, it seems to me,
 And may his glad birth-date we're honoring here
 Be added to year upon year upon year!

AN ACROSTIC FOR JOHN T. TROWBRIDGE

By Nathan Haskell Dole

Jovial youth shines from his eyes;
 On his lips flash witty, wise,
 Heaven-inspired swift repartees.
 Never cruel, sure to please!
 Trowbridge has lived many years;
 Only in his hair appears
 What the world misnames Old Age —
 Not a sign in speech or page
 Serious he may often be —
 Earnest Prophet then is he!
 None can equal him for Truth,
 Dower superb for Age or Youth!
 Trained to form the rhythmic line,
 Radiant, sparkling like rare wine,
 Or to build in polished prose
 Where the lofty spirit glows.
 Blest with genius rainbow-hued,
 Rich with stories wit-endued,
 Is our Trowbridge whom the fates
 Deal to-day new packs of dates!
 Generous-hearted, genial friend,
 Every Blessing on his noble head descend!

TO MR. JOHN TOWNSEND TROWBRIDGE

By Finlay Ferguson Bush

If I by chance could have my way,
 Or owned the cap of Fortunatus,
 I'd write a poem every day
 Of unmistakable afflatus;
 And each should be
 The kind John T.
 Trowbridge wrote for you and me.

I'd write a story every week,
Of something like three hundred pages,
That all who read should gladly seek,
No matter what might be their ages;
And each should be
The kind John T.
Trowbridge wrote for you and me.

And when, through years of noble strife,
My fame had grown like Lebanon's cedars,
I'd write the story of my life
To charm discriminating readers;
And it should be
The kind John T.
Trowbridge wrote for you and me.

But more than all, I'd be a man
Whose presence makes the world seem better;
Whose days are shaped upon a plan
That leaves each friend he meets his debtor.
My life should be
The kind John T.
Trowbridge lives for you and me.

TO MR. JOHN TOWNSEND TROWBRIDGE

By Mary Louise Keisker

I cannot tell in simple prose
The love with which my heart o'erflows;
But when I try to write in verse
I find I say it even worse;
And so I leave you, dear, to guess,
What neither prose nor verse express.

ACCOMPANYING A TOY LETTER-BOX

By Caroline Ticknor

This seems a tiny letter-box,
But things are seldom what they seem,

LIFE AND LETTERS

And in its fancied vacuum
Are those of which you do not dream.

It is crammed full of wishes fair
For one who has deserved life's best,
And in its vast interior
A mass of loving thoughts are pressed.

The good things in this box concealed
Would rouse a sovereign's jealousy,
It holds dear thoughts intangible
From a great reading coterie.

And grateful readers far and wide
And countless loving friends close by
Have packed into this letter box
Goods that you never may espy.

But all the same they are your own
This box these gems bravely defends,
It holds a thousand pounds of love
And birthday greetings from all friends.

TO JOHN TOWNSEND TROWBRIDGE

By Oscar Fay Adams

How sweetly runs the poet's verse
Whose life is rounded harmony !
How can we half its charm rehearse
In our poor lines *sans* melody.

I trow he hath not lived in vain
Whose lines bridge o'er the vale of years
From youth to age, and still remain,
Brimful as erst of all that cheers !

THE PAGES OF J. T. T.

By Abbie Farwell Brown

There is no king upon a throne
Who boasts such pages for his own —

So many, all so kind and true,
So cheerful and so witty, too;
Wise and amusing, large or small,—
And no dull page among them all.
Oh how contented I should be
If one such page belonged to me.

FOR MR. TROWBRIDGE'S BIRTHDAY

By George J. Smith

To-day make obeisance to Trowbridge,
Bowing far as men duck at a low bridge!
Yet that image is poor,
For we are quite sure
That to his height of fame there is no bridge.

TO MR. TROWBRIDGE

By Hyacinth Smith

To-day, your natal day,
A new friendship I bring
Ah, friend, accept I pray
My offering!

A BIRTHDAY GREETING TO MR. J. T. TROWBRIDGE

By Martha Fletcher Bellinger

Dear unknown Friend: could I invoke
The Muses Nine to form my manner
I'd sing your praises North and South,
From Maine to darkest Indiana.
I'd lay my thanks before your shrine,
I'd drink your health in fragrant wine,
I'd e'en turn cook that you might dine—
So high I hold your banner.

Long since in youth I caught the glow
Of fervent admiration
I used to watch the postman slow
Nearing our habitation.

LIFE AND LETTERS

I'd cry the *Youth's Companion* is for me,
 Give me the tale signed J. T. T.,
 No common yarns the source can be
 Of my infatuation!

As years went on I felt the joy
 Of friendship's soft indulgence
 When book or poem from your pen
 Brought back the old effulgence;
 I took your gifts, unasked but dear,
 Afar I traced your soul's career,
 I've been your friend for forty year,—
 (I admit without repugnance.)

So here's a health to you and yours,
 A toast to all your victories;
 A bugle-call to years to come,
 A wish that all life's mysteries
 May grow but sweeter to your eyes,
 That love and hope and sweet surprise
 With every morning sun may rise
 To give their tender ministries.

ACCOMPANYING A LEAD PENCIL IN THE FORM OF A CANE

By Ethel S. Ticknor

Although you do not need a staff
 To aid your sturdy tread
 Perhaps this kind of walking stick
 Is not the kind you dread.

It surely must have played its part
 At those important times
 When genius burned and the result
 Was romances and rhymes.

And so I trust you will accept
 The aid this cane will bring
 And not decline to make a use
 Of my poor offering.

TWO PICTURES

By Helen A. Clarke

A little girl with golden hair,
A great big book upon a chair,
Lost is she to childish care
For joy in Father Brighthopes there.

Father Brighthopes on a throne,
The little girl, a woman grown,
A faint star in a brilliant zone
Casts at his feet this little pome.

MR. J. T. TROWBRIDGE ON HIS BIRTHDAY

By Charlotte Porter

There were giants on the earth in those days,—
So every one says,—

The days of the famous Bostonian,—
Men strong-souled and witty,
Who far-famed their city,
Deserving the praises
That every one raises:

And the crown of this club of "The Rimers"
Is, now, that a King of old-timers
On his Birthday holds with us this revel.
Then, O, here's may we rise to the level

Of him, of our famous Bostonian,
Who, strong-souled and witty,
Has far-famed his city,
Deserving all praises
That every one raises,
Here's to him!—Our famous Bostonian!

TO MR. J. T. TROWBRIDGE

An Inscription for a Bas-Relief by C. E. Dallin

By Colonna Murray Dallin

As thus you sit with fleeting smile
And calmly read, your face alit
With some sweet thought or flash of wit,
Oh let us listen for a while.

Read some bright tale, to many dear,
In your delightful manner told;
Read to us from your 'Book of Gold'
And your 'Home Idyl' let us hear.

Do not forget to read us, too,
Things written in a merry mood;
And for a little interlude
A clever parody will do.

And 'My Own Story' read again,
It is a charming legacy,
With many a precious memory
Of stirring times and famous men.

Read on, dear friend, your tales and lays,
And may you find as seasons go,
The listening circle wider grow,
And life's best blessings crown your days.

LINES TO J. T. T.

By Ethel B. Howard

In the heroic days when Greece was young,
The victor in the games, god-like and strong,
Up bore the silver olive on his brow
Homeward, amid a glad and singing throng.

But now, O winner in a sturdier game,
Than where they strove, and in a race more long
Heaven sets the wealth of silver on your head,
And we are they who follow you with song.

Poet Lore

WINTER, 1906

The Smug Citizen	Translated by Edwin Hopkins	Maxim Gorki	1
The All Embracing		Ingram Crockett	74
In Re Caliban		Oscar Lovell Triggs	76
A Group of Poems		Leconte de Lisle	87
I. Moonlight.	II. The Fall of the Stars.	III. Birds of Prey.	
	Translated by C. L. Crittenton		
Plato as a Literary School for Writers		Janet Payne Bowles	90
The Wanderer	Translated from the original Anglo-Saxon	Clarence J. Bulleit	96
The Motherless Heroine		Louise Maunsell Field	99
Two Sonnets		Anne Cleveland Cheney	102
Southern Verse: A Traditional Literature		Tom Sigismund Stribling	103
The German Fairy Tale Contest		Max Bratt	109
Shakespeare's Clownery		Charles W. Hodell	113
Life and Letters			119
The Publisher's Desk : Plans for 1907			

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